



Hollywood
madam
faces 3 years
in jail

Tikriti admits Kuwait invasion a mistake

STOCKHOLM (AP) — A top Iraqi official has told a Swedish newspaper that the 1990 invasion of Kuwait was a serious mistake. The remarkable statement by Barzan Ibrahim Al Tikriti, President Saddam Hussein's half brother and head of Iraq's U.N. mission in Geneva, came in an exclusive interview published Sunday by Svenska Dagbladet. "It was the first time a high-level official has admitted publicly that the invasion was a mistake. 'It's regrettable that Iraq invaded Kuwait,' Mr. Tikriti said. 'I wish it would not have happened since the consequences have been terrible for the Iraqi people.' Mr. Tikriti is the youngest of President Saddam's three half-brothers from his mother's second marriage. Mr. Tikriti's father is a brother of President Saddam's father. In the interview, Mr. Tikriti expressed frustration over the United States' unwillingness to talk to Iraq. 'They refuse to see us,' he said. Now that Iraq has recognized Kuwait, he said, 'we do everything we can to put things right again. The United States and Iraq cannot continue to be enemies; we need each other.'

Volume 19 Number 5785

Leading Pakistani editor killed

KARACHI (AP) — The prominent editor of a popular weekly political magazine was killed by gunmen who ambushed him as he left his office Sunday night, police said. Mohammad Salahuddin, editor of Takbeer, a right-wing Urdu-language publication, was coming out of a parking garage in his car when the attackers opened fire with pistols, according to police and Salahuddin's driver. He was hit at least six times. The motive for the attack appeared to be political, but police said they did not know who was responsible.

Man with \$500,000 held in Madrid

MADRID (AP) — An Iranian-born Spanish citizen was arrested Sunday at Madrid airport after currency worth just under \$500,000 was found stuffed in his suitcase, authorities said. Sohail Keyani Zameni, 31, was arrested for failing to declare the currency. He was trying to board a Lufthansa flight for Istanbul, Turkey via Frankfurt on Sunday morning, police said. Mr. Zameni, a resident of Madrid, told police he believed he was carrying medicine for victims of the Kurdish rebellion in southeastern Turkey. Police said his suitcase was stuffed with the equivalent of \$498,026 in Spanish, French and German currency.

Egypt wants to reduce Sinai force

TEL AVIV (AP) — The foreign ministry confirmed Sunday that Egypt wants to reduce the peacekeeping force in the Sinai desert, with one source saying Cairo sought to eliminate the multinational observers entirely. Egypt, trying to cut its third of the annual \$50-million cost of the multinational force of observers (MFO), is again pushing for a reduction in the 2,400 troops. "In the last couple of years, the Egyptians have been regularly raising the issue of cutting down the expenses of the MFO," foreign ministry spokesman Yigal Palmon told the Associated Press. "Their suggestion is cutting down expenses by cutting down the force," he said.

Israel-Syria peace by spring — Baz

CAIRO (AFP) — An Israeli-Syrian peace accord is possible by next spring if U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher narrows the gap between the two sides during his forthcoming shuttle, an Egyptian official said Sunday. "Mr. Christopher should partly narrow the gap" but he will "not be able to reach a complete formula for a settlement," said presidential political advisor Usama Al Baz. The conclusion of a peace accord was possible by "next spring," he told reporters after holding talks with British Junior Foreign Minister Douglas Hogg in Cairo. Mr. Christopher is to visit Syria and Israel between Tuesday and Thursday.

Militants buying arms in Switzerland*

ZURICH (R) — The Swiss federal prosecutor's office has been monitoring the activities of Islamic fundamentalists said to be using Switzerland as a base to buy and ship arms to Algeria, a Swiss newspaper reported on Sunday. The newspaper Sonntags Zeitung reported that it had obtained documents in which the prosecutor's office said it had observed Algerian citizens or people of Algerian origin for several months involved in illegal trafficking in support of the Islamic opposition in Algeria. Peter Lehman, spokesman for the prosecutor's office, had no comment on the newspaper report. According to the report, the prosecutor's office also said in the documents that since last March special efforts had been made to purchase weapons, explosives, munitions and "technical equipment."

The Haaretz newspaper said the army would recommend that Israel remain in charge of security, particularly in the self-rule au-

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation

Libyan held in France over UTA bombing

PARIS (R) — A Libyan national is being held in France in a probe into the 1989 mid-air bombing of a French airliner in which 71 people died, an interior ministry spokesman said on Sunday. He said Omar Ali Mansour was detained on Thursday in Paris. The spokesman said Mr. Mansour was detained on a warrant from anti-terrorist investigating magistrate Jean-Louis Bruguiere. Mr. Bruguiere had asked police to hold him until Monday when he will question him. Mr. Bruguiere suspects Libyan involvement in the bombing of a French airline UTA DC-10 which exploded over Niger and crashed in the Sahara desert. Libya's failure to help the French investigation, together with its refusal to hand over suspects in the 1988 bombing of Pan Am flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, in which 270 people died, has led to United Nations sanctions against Tripoli.



AMMAN MONDAY, DECEMBER 5, 1994, RAJAB 1, 1415

Price: Jordan 150 Fils

Damascus seeks to defuse Beirut crisis

Hariri, Berri hold talks with Khaddam

DAMASCUS (Agencies) — Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Al Hariri and Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri opened talks with Syrian Vice-President Abdul Halim Khaddam on Sunday on how to defuse a political crisis arising from Mr. Hariri's resignation.

Diplomats said Mr. Khaddam met Mr. Berri first and then they were joined by Mr. Hariri. No details were available of the meeting which was not reported by Syria's state-run media.

The diplomats said Syria was unhappy about Lebanese leaders keeping Damascus busy solving their problems.

The diplomats said it was unlikely that President Hafez Al Assad would meet the Lebanese leaders on Sunday.

Mr. Hariri says he is resigning because his ambitious plans to rebuild Lebanon following its 1975-90 civil war were being obstructed.

Mr. Berri, a civil war chief, is said to be the prime minister's main opponent, with supporters in the cabinet who openly criticise Mr. Hariri.

Both Mr. Hariri and Mr. Berri have close links with Syria, the main foreign power broker in Lebanon where it has some 35,000 troops.

Mr. Hariri told President Elias Hrawi on Thursday of his "definite wish" to step down after two years in power, a move which has pushed Lebanon to the brink of economic and political turmoil.

But he would not formally present his letter of resignation to the president until after his talks in Syria, aviators said.

Syria pulls the political strings in Beirut and deploys 35,000 troops in Lebanon. Analysts in Lebanon be-



Rafik Hariri

lieve the final verdict on Mr. Hariri's resignation will be made by Damascus and it will depend on whether it still needs him as prime minister.

Mr. Hariri for his part has said he will do everything he could to dissuade billionaire Saudi-backed Hariri from stepping down.

But Mr. Hariri, stung by fierce opposition attacks, said in a television interview Saturday there was "no room for manoeuvre."

Parliament refused Mr. Hariri special powers when he took office and is now refusing urgent approval of his \$11.38 billion 10-year reconstruction programme.

A close advisor said there was scarcely a one per cent chance he would change his mind.

The announcement Thursday sent shock waves through Beirut's money markets, causing shares in the Solidere company Mr. Hariri created to rebuild war-shattered Beirut to tumble.

Mr. Hariri was seen as the only man with the vision to rebuild the country when he was appointed in October 1992 and has won the confidence of international financial markets needed to fund reconstruction.

Damascus will have to decide whether to give in to Mr. Hariri's demand to sack the pro-Syrian ministers who oppose him, analysts say.

The resignation crisis comes at a bad time for the Syrians, who do not want to be faced with turmoil in Lebanon when they are focusing their attention on talks with Israel.

Mr. Hariri's announcement came just days ahead of a peace mission by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, due in the region between Tuesday and Thursday in a renewed bid to break the deadlock in Israeli-Syrian talks.

Lebanon and Syria have vowed not to sign a peace deal with Israel without the other.

Mr. Berri has not appeared in public since the latest crisis erupted and has made no comment to the press.

Mr. Hariri aides say Mr. Berri, and his supporters in the cabinet, make it impossible for him to rule because Mr. Berri wants the last word in every decision.

Parliament refused Mr. Hariri special powers when he took office and is now refusing urgent approval of his \$11.38 billion 10-year reconstruction programme.

Mr. Khaddam, who invited Mr. Berri and Mr. Hariri to Damascus for reconciliation talks, is the Syrian leader who handles Lebanon issues and was expected to preside at the talks.

Mr. Hariri was seen as the only man with the vision to rebuild the country when he was appointed in October 1992 and has won the confidence of international financial markets needed to fund reconstruction.



DRUZE PROTEST: Israeli policemen arrest a Druze cleric during a violent demonstration held by the Druze community in Israel on Sunday. Several thousand Druze demonstrated in front of the prime minister's office in order to gain

more funding for Druze areas, disturbing the cabinet meeting. Rocks were thrown at the police, nine policemen and several demonstrators were injured (AFP photo)

EU lends \$300m to PNA

GAZA CITY (AFP) — The European Commission has pushed through a \$300 million bank loan to the cash-strapped Palestinian self-rule authority, chief negotiator Nabil Shaath said Sunday.

The loan, repayable over 25 years at four per cent interest with a five-year grace period, will go to the public and private sectors, Dr. Shaath said in a statement sent to news agencies.

The loan had run into difficulties as the European Investment Bank, which handles the money, had stopped negotiations on grounds that it can only lend to independent countries, Dr. Shaath said.

Sheikh Hamad spoke in an interview with the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), which was reproduced by the official Qatari News Agency.

He said that during an international donors conference in Brussels last week when Qatar boycotted a GCC ministerial meeting in Riyadh to protest Saudi Arabia's refusal to acknowledge the issue to Jacques Delors, head of the European Commission.

Mr. Delors intervened and the European Commission presented guarantees backing the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), said Dr. Shaath who was also in Brussels.

Dr. Shaath said the loan would go to the private sector, via Palestinian banks, to develop tourism and exports such as clothing, flowers and agricultural produce.

Part of it would be used by the authority for long-term projects such as a port, an airport and power supply in the self-rule Gaza Strip.

The Palestinians have complained that only a trickle of the \$720 million promised by international donors for this year had come through.

During the Brussels conference, donors agreed to release \$125 million in emergency funding to the Palestinians, separate from the loan.

Another \$23 million will be invested in urgently-needed projects to improve the infrastructure in the autonomous areas and to create thousands of jobs.

The acting foreign minister, Hamed Yousef Humadi, held Washington fully responsible for the repercussions of the "aggression," the agency reported.

He asked the Security Council to condemn the U.S. intercepts and take appropriate measures to prevent similar incidents in the future, the agency said.

The Palestinian cabinet which met here Saturday urged Israel to comply with the terms of the autonomy deal which launched Palestinian self-rule in the Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho in May.

Sharif was ordered to stop several dozen metres away, but he approached and, according to Israel Radio, locked his arms around a soldier. As the soldier jumped away Sharif set off the detonator. Although the rest of the bomb did not go off, the detonator's explosion propelled Sharif towards the soldiers who pushed him away and opened fire, the army said.

Sharif was hospitalised

(Continued on page 3)

Qatar says border row with Saudis is transient

DOHA (AP) — Qatar said Sunday it believed a long-running territorial dispute with Saudi Arabia, reignited by border skirmishes earlier this year, could be resolved.

Qatari Foreign Minister Sheikh Hamad Ben Jassim Al Thani said his country had refrained from publicising the latest incidents "out of a desire not to escalate the dispute" and to avoid tarnishing "fraternal relations," with Saudi Arabia and its Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) partners.

Sheikh Hamad spoke in an interview with the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), which was reproduced by the official Qatari News Agency.

The tension peaked last week when Qatar boycotted a GCC ministerial meeting in Riyadh to protest Saudi Arabia's refusal to acknowledge the issue to Jacques Delors, head of the European Commission.

The dispute threatened to undermine the GCC annual summit meeting, scheduled to start Dec. 19 in Bahrain.

The Saudi-led alliance also groups Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates and Oman.

"We are optimistic about bypassing our differences with sisterly Saudi Arabia," the Qatari minister said. "We think there are fundamentals which bring together the two sisterly states in many matters. Also we think that we are capable of resolving this dispute is possible."

Two people were killed in September 1992 when the border dispute flared into an armed conflict. Egypt mediated a reconciliation.

Asked how the dispute could be resolved, he replied: "If there are good intentions between the two sides, God willing they are there, then solving and bypassing this dispute is possible."

Meanwhile, an official statement said a meeting of the Joint Jordanian-Israeli Committee scheduled for today (Monday) has been postponed and new schedule will be announced later. The statement attributed the postponement to the weather conditions in the country.

Israeli delegation arrives

AMMAN (J.T.) — A team of five officials from the Israeli foreign ministry led by Uri Halivni arrived Sunday in Amman for final arrangements connected with the opening of the Israeli embassy

next Sunday.

Next Sunday will also witness the opening of the Jordanian embassy in Tel Aviv in implementation of Article 5 of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty signed on Oct. 26.

A Jordanian Foreign Ministry delegation led by Omar Rifai, head of the ministry's special office, visited Tel Aviv last week and held talks about arrangements for the opening of the Jordanian embassy there.

The opening of the embassy was scheduled to take place on Dec. 10 but was put off by a day because Dec. 10 was a Saturday, an Israeli holiday.

Mr. Rifai told AFP the inauguration will be "kept simple, and the flags will be hoisted by respective charges d'affaires."

Meanwhile, an official statement said a meeting of the Joint Jordanian-Israeli Committee scheduled for today (Monday) has been postponed and new schedule will be announced later. The statement attributed the postponement to the weather conditions in the country.

Iraq demands Security Council action over ship interceptions

NICOSIA (Agencies) — Iraq has urged the U.N. Security Council to condemn the interception of several Iraqi vessels by U.S. warships in the Gulf and the alleged beating of Iraqi seamen.

The state-run Iraqi News Agency (INA) said late Saturday that the American actions were an attempt to escalate the situation in the Gulf. It provided no direct quotations.

Meanwhile, talks between Israel and the PLO on Palestinian elections, scheduled to resume Monday in Cairo, have been delayed by a day at Israel's request.

Dr. Shaath said Saturday Israel had requested that the talks begin Tuesday. He did not elaborate.

The council, which recently voted to renew international trade sanctions against Iraq, is unlikely to respond to the Iraqi request.

Mr. Humadi reiterated Iraq's claim that some Iraqi seamen were beaten by American inspectors who boarded the vessels, INA said.

The U.S. Navy said Saturday it had boarded five vessels suspected of breaking U.N. sanctions on Iraq in recent days and had to cuff "uncooperative crewmen" aboard one, an Iraqi seaman.

"Our government position is that we need to move quickly to show that we will not tolerate any attempt from the part of (Iraqi President) Saddam Hussein" to threaten peace in the Gulf, Gen. Shalikashvili said.

Iraq on Sunday blamed Kuwait for hindering efforts to resolve the question of Kuwaitis missing since the 1991 Gulf war, one of the obstacles to lifting the U.N. embargo on Baghdad.

The government daily Al-Jumhuria said Baghdad had "fully cooperated with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and had invited different commissions to carry out investigations across Iraq."

But "Kuwait had rejected all initiatives," it added.

It said the issue of the missing Kuwaitis as well as the questions of restoring Kuwaiti goods and human rights "were evoked by Washington and London as a diversion and disinformation."

Intifada Cubs carry on the fight against Israel

KHAN YUNIS (AFP) — A new generation of Palestinians has taken up the fight against Israel where their older brothers left off — armed only with stones these are the Intifada Cubs.

Many of the children here were too young to join in the Palestinian uprising at its height in the early years after its launch in 1987, but they still dream of forcing Jewish settlers and the remaining Israeli soldiers out of Gaza.

When they are not hunting birds on the sand dunes close to an Israeli army base, the favourite past-time for Zuhdi Abdul Razek, 12 and his pals is throwing stones at the soldiers.

The accords signed between Israel and the PLO aimed at ending decades of violence and the intifada, seem to have made little difference.

"I am for peace, but not with the settlers still around us," said Mr. Zuhdi.

About 4,000 Israelis live in 19 Jewish settlements across the autonomous Gaza Strip, all of them protected by the Israeli army.

Khan Yunis refugee camp, a squall warren of tiny concrete houses is surrounded by the Jewish settlements of Ganei Tal and Nevet De-kalim on two sides, with the Israeli army in between.

Zuhdi and his friends have been impressed by a wave of suicide bombings by the Islamists.

"I am for peace, but not with the settlers still around us," said Mr. Zuhdi.

Now, a new high makeshift tower of concrete blocks protects the Netzarim soldiers and a huge sand barrier surrounds them. Other posts across the Strip have also been fortified.

"Each area has its own cubs," Mr. Zuhdi said. "We only go out on the asphalt road separating us from the army, or stay on the sand."

"We don't really have a leader, but our best aim here is Maher," he said pointing to another boy. Maher Hassan, also 12 was

mic Resistance Movement Hamas, and the smaller Islamic Jihad both in Israel and in Gaza.

"I like Hamas because they carry out operations," Mr. Zuhdi said.

According to Israeli army officials, nine soldiers and one settler have been killed in the Strip since the launch of self-rule in May. Armed attacks in Israel and the West Bank left another 36 dead.

The cubs enjoy taunting the Israeli soldiers, hurling stones with vigour.

Older cubs from the Nuseirat and Breej camps even managed to climb up an Israeli post outside the tiny Jewish settlement of Netzarim, hoist the Palestinian flag and burn the abandoned be-longs.

They made sure to leave behind their "Intifada Cubs" signature emblazoned across nearby walls.

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"Sometimes we go up to them at the fence and chat. Some of them speak Arabic, and we have nice conversations and they joke with us," he said.

"Then, we step back and take aim."

By sundown the boys were on their way home and Hussein Abu Rezk, 18 and other older teenagers prepared to take over, on the lookout for what they called infiltrators from the Israeli special forces.

The other night, three came through and we called the Palestinian police and stood guard till the infiltrators fled back."

recent saying only: "I once hit a soldier's glasses."

The group laughed but said they also wanted to give peace a chance.

"When I am older, all this will stop because the settlers will be out of here," said Khalil Mustafa, 14.

"Maybe in a year or two they'll be gone, according to the peace plan."

"Add two more zeroes to your figures," laughed another boy.

Meanwhile Israeli soldiers watch from towers over the sand dunes as the boys hunt and play.

"We first shout to the soldiers to open up their windows," Mr. Mustafa said, pointing to one of the posts in the near distance.

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Palestinian children play with stones and toy guns in Nusseirat camp in the Gaza Strip. Known as Intifada Cubs, the children, who were too young to join in the intifada at its

height after its launch in 1987, repeatedly stone Israeli soldiers guarding settlements on the strip (AFP photo)

Mideast trio collects Nobel this week as hazy peace holds

NICOSIA (AFP) — Yasser Arafat, Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres, three of the Middle East's veteran players, collect the Nobel Prize on Saturday for a peace deal blighted by killings and under constant threat from extremists.

Their historic self-rule accord, which launched Palestinian autonomy in the Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho in May, will have returned to its birthplace at the award ceremony in Oslo.

But the very day that the winners were announced on Oct. 14, an Israeli soldier died in a hostage drama. Only last week, a woman soldier was killed by a Palestinian militant armed with an axe.

Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat has found himself under siege from Hama militants who demand nothing less than the return of all land from the Mediterranean to the Jordan River — which means the destruction of the Jewish state.

Israeli Prime Minister Rabin and his old political

rival Foreign Minister Peres meanwhile have faced the wrath of Jewish hardliners who claim the West Bank as part of "Biblical Israel."

Violence by militants on both sides and a chronic shortage of cash for Mr. Arafat's beleaguered Palestinian self-rule authority have steadily undermined the fragile accord.

Mr. Arafat, who has ended his globe-trotting career to settle in impoverished Gaza, is "surely in need of a prestige boost after the clashes between his police and fundamentalists last month in which 15 Palestinians died."

And amid a resurgence of attacks by Palestinian opponents of the peace process which culminated in a suicide bus bombing in Tel Aviv in the death, Mr. Arafat could face embarrassment if, some Norwegian deputies boycott the ceremony at Oslo's Grand Hotel.

The award to the Palestinian leader has already been shaken by the resignation of a Nobel Committee member. Mr. Arafat's "past is tainted with violence, terrorism and bloodshed," protested Kaare Kristiansen.

But amid the resignation and charges it was premature to hail peace in the Middle East, the committee has stood its ground, as Mr. Arafat and former army "hawk" Mr. Rabin prepare to follow in the footsteps of Mother Teresa of Calcutta.

The committee elected by the Storting, or Norwegian parliament, hopes the award will "serve as an encouragement to all the Israelis and Palestinians who are endeavouring to establish lasting peace in the region."

The Sept. 13, 1993 declaration of principles (DoP) on autonomy signed in Washington is meanwhile struggling to enter a new phase.

After the completion of a handover of civilian powers to the Palestinians in the West Bank last week, negotiations resume this week in Cairo aimed at breaking a stalemate on holding elections.

While the violence escalates, with the Israeli heartland becoming a prime target for Hamas, Israel's army has grown increasingly reluctant to redeploy on the West Bank.

But in reality, he lobbied

R.I.P.

Carl Adel Al-Uzaizi

Passed away on Dec. 4th, 1994 in London, age 34. Funeral will be held Wednesday 7-12-1994 (in London). Beloved grandchild of Rocks Al-Uzaizi & the late Helana (nee Marar).

Son of Adel Al-Uzaizi & Mavis (nee Hoy). Brother of George, Waleed, Emile, Roxanne & Nizar.

Address for condolences:

Emile Al-Uzaizi,
Bishops Park Rd,
116 Bishops Mansions
London SW6
Fax 0044 71 736 0536

In Amman:

Cables: Al-Uzaizi, P.O.Box 5161, Amman. Fax 641078

hard to ensure Mr. Peres would not go down alone in history as Israel's architect of the autonomy deal with the PLO as "Biblical Israel."

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Charismatic 'emir' brings fragile peace to Afghan province

HERAT (AFP) — An island of fragile peace has been created amid the chaos and bloodshed of the war in Afghanistan thanks to the iron-fisted, charismatic rule of one man dubbed "the emir."

U.N. officials and several charity organisations unanimously agree that Ismael Khan has managed to bring relative calm and prosperity to this western province in the two years since he came to power.

The province and adjoining regions have been cleared of local thugs and fighting between rival factions has been stopped.

There are even a number of rag-tag police officers trying to enforce traffic regulations, an incongruous sight in this dusty oasis with a population of around 500,000 camping in the ruins of war, with no electricity or drinking water.

Even though many districts in Herat are still in ruins and government buildings in desperate need of repair, a handful of trade centres are being erected in central Herat and private cars which disappeared 15 years ago are once again back on the streets.

Herat also serves as a crossroads for goods being smuggled into the country and south to Pakistan.

Every day, dozens of second-hand automobiles and thousands of tonnes of Japanese tires leave Dubai, in the United Arab Emirates, and cross Iran to reach Herat.

The final destination is northwestern Pakistan where they join a hoard of other smuggled goods.

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Court bans Egypt from displaying relics abroad

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt is banned from exhibiting its unique archaeological treasures abroad and has had to cut short a money-spinning display in Japan after a court ruling here, legal officials said Sunday.

The High administrative court in Cairo passed the ban, which is not subject to appeal, after complaints by veteran Egyptian campaigner and archaeologist Nimat Ahmad Fawad of possible damage to the artefacts.

The court banned the exhibition of 72 ancient pieces which went on display in seven Japanese towns including Tokyo and Osaka in January and was to continue until March 1995.

Fearing the verdict, Egyptian Culture Minister Farouq Hosni brought the treasures back to Egypt two days beforehand.

But he complained about the decision. "This exhibition was a great success and earned two million dollars for Egypt," he grumbled.

"The 72 pieces, which have now been in Egypt for three

days, have been examined by a team of specialists who say they are in an excellent condition," he added.

The Cairo court said that from now on only ancient artefacts which "are not unique and are not likely to be damaged" can go on display outside Egypt.

The pieces in the Japanese exhibition were made out of wood; glass and limestone, all very fragile materials, and 37 of them were "unique," it added.

It recalled that "several unique ancient artefacts returned in a damaged condition after exhibitions in the United States, Canada and Australia."

The Japanese display includes a bust of queen Hat-shepsut, a dagger belonging to the pharaoh Ahmose and a gold chain belonging to the pharaoh's mother — all around 3,500 years old.

The culture ministry argued that such exhibitions were "the best advertisement for Egypt and contribute to the promotion of tourism."

Relics return to the land of the Pharaohs

CAIRO (AFP) — Egyptians have the chance to see for the first time some of the artefacts discovered by European archaeologists during excavations on their country in an unique exhibition which has opened in Cairo.

Thirteen European countries are taking part in the exhibition in the Egyptian Museum which marks the start of a series of meetings and conferences to promote closer archaeological cooperation between Egypt and Europe.



Home News

JORDAN TIMES, MONDAY, DECEMBER 5, 1994 3

Sudan rejects U.N. res. on right



Her Royal Highness Princess Sarvath Al Hassan Thursday views Pakistani art hereby Pakistani Ambassador to Jordan Tariq Khan Afridi and Mrs. Cristina Afridi works on display at the Royal Cultural Centre. The Princess is accompanied

Colours, forms of Pakistani art display trends over generations

AMMAN (J.T.) — An exhibition of Pakistani paintings entitled "Colours and Forms," concludes today at the Royal Cultural Centre (RCC) where Her Royal Highness Princess Sarvath Al Hassan opened the event last week. Sponsored and organised by the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan in cooperation with the National Arts Council of Pakistan, the exhibition includes the works of 21 classic-

al and contemporary artists.

The artist used all types of media, from oil, acrylic and watercolours to pastels and etchings, depicting different trends in Pakistani art. The exhibition was displayed in an unusual setting for the RCC.

Organisers made use of the centre's Blue Room which rarely serves as an exhibition venue.

The area was kept in darkness, while the paintings were suspended from the ceiling,

giving a feeling of floatation. Lighting was directed on each painting individually enhancing the depth and focal point of the artwork.

Traditional lighted incense sticks and music played by members of the local Pakistani community created a special atmosphere in which to view the works. After Amman, the exhibition will be displayed in other countries of the region.

According to Dr. Abada Amman has not witnessed an early snow fall such as this since 1923, although in 1956 and 1979 snow fell on very

Light rain, some snow expected in hilly areas

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Meteorology Department Sunday said it expected light rain and occasional snow on hilly regions today, with frost formation particularly in the early hours of the day.

A department spokesman said that despite the movement of the low atmospheric pressure to northern Iraq, its effects will continue to be felt in the next two days when skies will be clear to partly cloudy, and temperatures are expected to dip below freezing at night and rise to a maximum of 7°C during the day.

Contrary to the department's predictions of severe snow storms affecting the country Sunday, the weather conditions improved, with no snowfall in the central regions.

Meteorology Department Chief Ali Abada told Jordan Television Sunday that the original forecast was meant for the southern regions in particular rather than the Amman area alone.

But in Karak, Tafileh and Shobak heavy snow fell overnight, and in Ras Minif in the north and the Tafileh heights in the south, nearly 45 centimetres of snow blanketed these areas.

According to Dr. Abada Amman has not witnessed an early snow fall such as this since 1923, although in 1956 and 1979 snow fell on very

high regions in the north and south.

The Ministry of Public Works Sunday reported that all roads in the Amman, Madaba, Zarqa, Mafraq, Jerash and Irbid areas were open adding that some roads like the Karunjeh-Jordan Valley Road and Mazar-Tafileh road were still blocked by snow or landslides.

In Amman, the Higher Civil Defence Council met under the chairmanship of Interior Minister Salameh Hammad to review the general public safety situation in the Kingdom following the storms of the past two days.

The council discussed the formation of voluntary teams to help the concerned authorities in dealing with rescue and other operations.

The council which groups representatives of several government ministries as well as the Civil Defence and Public Security departments reviewed the reopening of culverts and roads and the distribution of sufficient road-clearing equipment.

Abdul Wahab Zoubi, secretary general of the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources, said efforts are under way to ensure sufficient gas, diesel oil and kerosene to various governors.

He said that the storms of the past two days delayed the distribution of fuel.

Zarqa police round up 14 burglary suspects

By Rana Husseini
Special to the Jordan Times

ZARQA — Zarqa police Sunday announced that over a two-week period they arrested 14 suspects in more than 100 burglaries in different parts of the Kingdom, according to Brigadier Abdul Khader Oran, director of the Zarqa Police Department.

Brig. Oran said the latest arrest took place on Nov. 20, when police apprehended four men, aged between 35-46, suspected of burglarising 50 homes during the day-time in Zarqa suburbs.

He said, the items stolen from the homes included jewellery, money, electronic equipment and other valuables.

"Our investigators became suspicious of a man driving around Ruseifeh suburbs where most of the burglaries occurred and pulled him over for questioning," Brig. Oran said during a press conference.

After searching his car, he added, police units found skeleton keys and foreign currency.

According to Brig. Oran, the suspect, a Whidat resident, confessed to committing 50 burglaries since 1991, including 29 homes in Amman, 17 in Zarqa. 3 in Salt

and one in Irbid, with the help of three other individuals.

Brig. Oran said that the main suspect, has a long criminal record, having been charged with burglaries and two other individuals involved with him.

He said most of the suspects had previous records and were unemployed.

Meanwhile, four people were killed in two separate incidents in Amman on Sunday. Civil Defence Department (CDD) and police reports showed.

In Baqaa camp, two people were killed after being hit by a car, the reports said.

Kawther Mohammad M. 27, and her 4-year-old daughter Wala were attempting to cross a street when they were struck by a taxi, reports said.

Police would not release any further information, but said they apprehended the driver of the vehicle for questioning.

Also on Sunday, two people died of carbon monoxide poisoning in Al Rajib area near Sahab while sleeping with a kerosene heater lit.

Investigations led to the arrest of the factory guard and two other individuals.

Police are also questioning an individual who is sus-

Lebanon, Jordan agree to extend agricultural trade protocol — minister

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan and Lebanon have agreed in talks, held last week in Beirut to extend and promote a 1993 trade protocol primarily on the exchange of agricultural products, according to Minister of Agriculture Mansour Ben Tarif Sunday.

Speaking upon his return from Beirut Sunday for the talks at the head of a Jordanian delegation, the minister said Jordan and Lebanon will stick to the original protocol concerning the amounts of exchanged products and the dates on which they can be made depending on seasonal production.

He said the two sides would continue to hold meetings whenever necessary to discuss each other's requirements of additional amounts of goods.

According to Salem Lawzi,

head of the Agricultural Marketing Organisation (AMO), who accompanied the minister on the visit, Jordan annually exports to Lebanon eggplants, tomatoes, pepper, beans, squash and melons and imports Lebanese cherries, potatoes, pears, and grapes, but the balance of agricultural trade is clearly in Jordan's favour.

The two sides reached agreement on a mechanism to overcome obstacles impeding trade and stressed the need for ensuring the continued flow of agricultural products to the markets of either country, said the minister.

He said that he requested that the Lebanese authorities reduce the rate of tariffs and duty levied on trucks transporting Jordanian products to the Lebanese markets, and

the Lebanese side has agreed to arrange for contacts between the ministries of transport in the two countries to work out a mutually satisfactory arrangement.

According to Mr. Ben Tarif, the two sides agreed on giving preference and priority to imports of agricultural products from each other's countries.

Apart from the talks with government officials, the Jordanian delegation, which also included several merchants, toured the Bekaa, Zahleh, and Saida areas and met with local farmers to explain Jordan's views regarding the exchanges of produce.

Mr. Ben Tarif said he was received by Lebanese President Elias Hrawi to whom he conveyed greetings to the Lebanese leadership and people.

University plans dialogue, students claim deadlock on 60% grade

By Rana Husseini
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — University of Jordan officials and student union representatives were still on opposite sides of the fence Sunday, with administration member separately to try to persuade him to meet their demands, because they felt that their demands would not be met," the official said.

"So far, the appointed committee did not reach any decision and is still studying the request, and we cannot preclude matters. The student union wants the committee to simply rule in their favour," he added.

Meanwhile, the student union issued a statement saying that negotiations between the committee and the student union over the 60 per cent grade regulation.

The student union is demanding an alteration to the 60 grade regulation which stipulates that students retaking courses they have failed can only attain a maximum of 60 per cent.

"The committee which was appointed by the university (to study the issue) is still in place, but it seems that the student union members are trying to meet with each committee member separately to try to persuade him to meet their demands, because they felt that their demands would not be met," the official said.

"The student union is avoiding dialogue, and they will be responsible of their own acts," he added.

The student union first organised a protest on Nov. 26, threatening to boycott classes and organise further protests if the university administration did not reply to their demands.

On Nov. 29, more than 1,000 students boycotted classes in major faculties, then organised a march on campus followed by demonstrations in front of the president's office on campus.

NGOs broaden democratic debate

AMMAN (Petra) — A two-day workshop on strategies for consolidating the work of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) Sunday started here with an address by President of the Jordan Environment Society (JES) Ahmad Obaidat stressing the role of NGOs in broadening the base of democratic debate and enhancing public participation.

Mr. Obaidat added that NGOs also play a significant role in promoting public awareness and developing modern communities.

He said NGOs have de-

mocratised time and again their ability to develop effective mechanisms to serve national and humanitarian goals and to defend human rights. He noted that there are more than 13,000 NGOs worldwide.

Stefan Meinik of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation Academy will lecture on these topics, in addition to related subjects, such as the efficient use of resources, setting priorities, division of labour and cooperation with other organisations, and effects of political liberalisation on economic development.

Walter Rudel, representa-

WHAT'S GOING ON

FILMS

- ★ Film (in French) entitled "La Crise" at the French Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.
- ★ Film (in English) entitled "Birth of Renaissance: Giotto to Masaccio" (with commentary in Arabic by Dr. Khaled Kreis) at Darat Al Funun at 5:30 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Exhibition of Muna Saudi's private collection of contemporary arts and Jordanian antiques at Abdoun Village.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by Sadik Kwaish at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition by Akram Naji Shaker at Ab'ad Art Gallery.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by Dr. Ali Al Ghoul at the Italian Language Centre (Tel. 699348).
- ★ Exhibition of Pakistani art entitled "Colours and Forms" at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition by artists Latif Al Khateeb and Muhy Khaleefa at the Housing Bank Gallery.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by Saadi Al Kashi at Alia Art Gallery.
- ★ Exhibition of sculptures by Amer Khalil at Bab al Art Gallery.

Israel seeks safe way to expand self-rule

(Continued from page 1)

But the Palestinians, speaking on condition of anonymity, said they did not believe the man was carrying explosives.

Israeli soldiers guarding checkpoints near the self-rule areas have been tense for weeks following a series of suicide attacks claimed by the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, and the Islamic Jihad organisation. Both

oppose peace with Israel and have vowed to continue attacks.

Relatives in Gaza City denied that Sharif was carrying explosives.

"He was a simple citizen, he had never been arrested by the Israelis," Sharif's brother Yehia told AFP.

"He was not a Hamas member," he added.

Hamas said Sharif, who is hard of hearing, was a supporter but stressed he was not on an operation for the group.

Another of Sharif's brothers, Abdul Nasser, however, is a member of Hamas' armed wing, Izzedin Al Qassam and is serving time in an Israeli jail.

groups in all governorates and settlements and provides assistance to their endeavours towards socio-economic development, added Mr. Banna.

These societies are considered "schools," teaching the public the benefits of social solidarity and helping the ministry in providing urgently needed assistance to the underprivileged groups, Mr. Banna said.

Speaking on the eve of the event which is usually observed on Dec. 5, Mr. Banna said there are 740 voluntary societies in Jordan, of which 21 are non-Jordanian, all working in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Development.

He said that nearly 50,000 people are involved in voluntary and charitable missions at these institutions under the overall umbrella of the General Union of Voluntary Societies (GUVS).

Paying tribute to their work, Mr. Banna said that they complement the work of the ministry and its affiliated departments in various governorates.

The government encourages the creation of voluntary

Announcement

Entries for the Theory and Practical Examinations of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music will be accepted from 10 to 15 December 1994. The practical examination will be held in Amman next spring 1995.

For registration and further information about syllabuses and regulations, please contact the local representative:

The National Music Conservatory/Noor Al Hussein Foundation
Jabel Amman, Atiyat Building, Behind the Embassy of Kuwait
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Tel. 687620, Fax 687621

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Dhaka says Ansar mutiny quelled

DHAKA (R) — The Bangladesh government said Sunday that troops had quelled a three-day mutiny by thousands of auxiliary police over demands for higher wages and job security.

"The misguided members of the Ansar Force (as the auxiliaries are called) have surrendered to law-enforcing agencies in various parts of the country," an official statement said.

"The misguided Ansars have surrendered at Shafipur Ansar Academy, Khilgaon Ansar Headquarters, Lalmonirhat in the north, Navaran in western Jessore district and Faiz Lake in Chittagong," the statement said.

"Discipline has been restored at all these places," the statement concluded without giving details.

Unconfirmed reports earlier said up to four Ansars had been killed and many wounded as regular police and paramilitary soldiers tried to overpower them.

"One of our men is dead and several are injured," one auxiliary shouted at people

after soldiers stormed the auxiliary police headquarters at Khilgaon early Sunday.

An official, who declined to be identified, quoted police as telling him that up to three auxiliaries had been killed, many wounded and more than 1,000 arrested in Shafipur, north of Dhaka.

"All auxiliaries at their Khilgaon headquarters were forced to surrender but the process was still not over in Shafipur," he told Reuters.

The reports of the deaths could not be confirmed by other sources.

A report at the scene in Khilgaon said soldiers used rocket-launchers to demolish the walls of the headquarters.

Troops went into action following a high-level security meeting Saturday night, police said.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia headed the meeting attended by army chief Lieutenant-General Abu Saleh Mohammad Nasim, Home Secretary Azimuddin Ahmad and other top officials.

Fighting broke out when

regular police and paramilitary soldiers attempted to disarm and flush out hundreds of rebel auxiliary police holed up in their headquarters, witnesses said.

They said police used tear-gas and rubber bullets while soldiers fired with machineguns in battles against the rebels, who attacked with rifle fire.

Army helicopters hovered overhead, which the Ansars claimed had fired on them. Witnesses said they saw helicopters dropping tear gas canisters.

Reports from Shafipur Sunday said helicopters also attacked the academy and shelled neighbouring areas, trying to overpower the auxiliaries.

In Khilgaon, Lutfur Rahman Binu, personal photographer of the prime minister, said his home had been hit by several canisters, forcing his family to flee.

"Much of my house has been damaged. Glasses have been smashed and windows broken. Not only my family,

our neighbours also fled to safety," he told Reuters by telephone.

Others Khilgaon residents said they woke up to hundreds of gunshots, some fired by auxiliaries and some by troops, and rushed to safety.

Journalists saw Ansars carrying wounded colleagues and heard calls for help as smoke poured from the headquarters ground.

They said 664 Ansars surrendered at the headquarters where soldiers seized 740 rifles.

The trouble began Thursday day when thousands of Ansars, a back-up force recruited to help regular police keep law and order, mutinied at the Ansar Academy in Shafipur, a northern suburb of Dhaka, over demands for higher wages and job security.

The rebellion soon spread to Dhaka and other districts, officials said.

Officials put the number of Ansars at more than 25,000, one third of them armed with rifles.



Photo taken from a video footage shows a Philippine Navy frogman searches the capsized ferry boat Cebu City lying on its left side at the seabed about 100 feet under water for the bodies of missing passengers and crew includ-

ing the ship captain. The ferry boat carrying 598 passengers and crew was rammed by the Singapore-registered cargo ship Kota Suria in Manila Bay (AFP photo)

Chief mate of Manila Bay disaster ferry found alive near the shore

MANILA (R) — The Filipi-

re spokesman said Reynaldo Boludo was found floating close to the shore of Cavite province after being washed out of Manila Bay and down the coast. He had no details of his injuries.

A spokesman for the ship's owners, William Lines, confirmed Mr. Boludo had been found but had no further information.

Mr. Boludo is the most senior officer of the inter-

island ferry to be discovered alive since it sank before dawn Friday after colliding with the Singapore-registered container ship Kota Suria.

The Cebu City's Captain Wenceslau Lampang is among more than 100 people still missing after the accident. More than 450 were recovered alive.

Divers scouring the wreck of the 2,452-tonne Cebu City Sunday recovered three more bodies from the hull.

EU leaders to meet on Eastern Europe

BRUSSELS (R) — European Union (EU) leaders hold their end-of-year sum-

mit this week, grappling with the question of how to bring Eastern Europe into the fold without jeopardising their own economic and political goals.

Meeting Friday and Saturday in the industrial town of Essen, in Germany's Ruhr Valley, the EU leaders will try to agree on a strategy for bringing Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Romania, Bulgaria and Slovakia into the EU.

But, in a reflection of sharp internal differences over what the move will mean to the union, the summit is set to avoid most of the difficult questions, notably when enlargement will take place and how preparing for it will be paid for.

Ensuring political and economic stability in Eastern Europe has become the obsession of Western European policy makers, constantly reminded of the alternative by the anarchy of the Bosphorus.

NATO foreign ministers last week dedicated most of a two-day meeting on discussions about bringing the former Warsaw Pact rivals into the alliance.

On Monday, meanwhile, the 53-nation Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe will start a summit concerned with ways to secure stability in the former

appointed when it comes to money.

Plans for 7.07 billion Euro-

pean Currency Unit (\$8.47 billion) to be made available over five years to help the Easterners prepare for membership were put off last week after southern EU states essentially demanded more money to help development in North Africa and the Middle East.

The southerners, led by France and Spain, have been unnerved by the EU's moves to incorporate first the Nordic countries and then the Eastern ones, fearing a shift in the balance of power.

Responding to this, the European Commission has proposed a 5.5 billion ECU (\$6.6 billion) programme for the Mediterranean, a price far too high for the taste of many northern states.

The result is that the EU leaders will be presented simply with a proposal calling for a minimum level of already budgeted funding for both projects.

The summit's other main item is consideration of a follow up to an economic plan agreed last year to create jobs and boost Europe out of the recession it was in at the time.

The summit is being urged to endorse a list of 14 top-priority cross-border road and rail projects valued at 91 billion ECUs (\$110 billion) and to find ways of paying for them.

The Eastern leaders are likely to be equally dis-

Kinkel threatens to resign

WEIMAR, Germany (R) — German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel threatened to resign Saturday if his liberal party rules at its congress next week that its members cannot be both parliamentarians and ministers.

Mr. Kinkel told party members at the regional congress in Weimar in the east of the country that a ban on doubling up offices would be impractical.

Mr. Kinkel, whose Free

Democrat Party is a junior partner in Chancellor Helmut Kohl's coalition, also took a sideswipe at new radicals in the party, blaming them in part for the decline in the party's fortunes, which he said had coincided with the departure of the FDP's old guard.

In the past year the FDP has seen itself ousted from nine of the 16 state parliaments in the German Federation and from the European Parliament, and it won only 6.9 per cent of the votes in the Oct. 16 general election, down from 11 per cent four years ago.

Mr. Kinkel's arch rival for the FDP leadership, former Economy Minister Juergen Moellemann, suffered a stunning reverse Saturday when he was trounced in a party contest for the leadership of the North Rhine-Westphalia region in the west of the country.

Peru town flees rat invasion

LIMA (R) — An invasion of hungry rats has stripped the town of Quinocay in the hills outside Lima of all its food and sent townspies fleeing, town authorities said.

Antonio Valeriano, the town's mayor, asked the Peruvian federal government to declare a state of emergency because of the food shortage. "Quinocay is currently populated only by old people, women and children struggling for survival since all the men of working age are in neighbouring areas or in Lima," he said.

Victim finds if you want help, don't ask a policeman

LAGOS (R) — Lagos resident Lucas Agom is looking for a change in his luck after an armed gang burst into his home looking for cash.

Although he persuaded the gang to spare his life during Tuesday's hold-up, he decided to spend the night at his house, and proceeded to drink all his beer. The following day the hapless Agom to his bank and forced him to empty his account of 120,000 naira — around \$5,500. When he went to the attack to the police Thursday he recognised the chief inspector as the gang leader, took fright, and ran out of the building, only to be knocked down by a truck as he crossed the street.

Agom has since recovered from some of his injuries and opted for the quiet life back in his home village, the Nigerian Tribune daily newspaper reported Saturday.

"While in principle it's a good idea, in practice there are difficulties," he said.

Gurkhas could take over all U.N. peacekeeping roles

HONG KONG (R) — U.N. peacekeeping operations, currently dogged by confused command structures and a lack of flexibility, could take on a whole new look if an unofficial proposal to use Gurkhas is approved, defence experts say.

The proposal, which has found favour among some senior military leaders in a number of countries, aims to give the United Nations a military command structure it does not have at the moment so as to avoid much of the confusion and lack of decision which has plagued many operations.

Under the present system, when the U.N. Security Council passes a resolution member countries pledge troops on an ad hoc basis with usually one country appointed to overall command, such as the United States in the Gulf War.

But defence experts say this lack of command structure can create confusion on the ground, delays in deploying troops and makes decision-making difficult with so many different national military headquarters involved.

Their reputation as some of the finest soldiers in the world, carved out of nearly 200 years service with the British army, would also make clear to these factions that

troops add

would cut through many of the problems, they believe, and the British Army's Brigade of Gurkhas, with their hallmark toughness and high standards of discipline could be the ideal choice.

The Gurkhas also have the experience, having already been deployed in places like the Gulf, Cyprus, Rwanda and Bosnia, explained Brigadier-General Mervin Lee, the officer in charge of the Brigade of Gurkhas, based in Hong Kong but undergoing a phased withdrawal to Britain.

Brig. Lee stressed that the proposal was still very much just an idea.

"Gurkhas are very good natured and tolerant... (which would make them) the ideal type for coming between two warring factions, by setting a good example of tough soldiers who will act only when necessary," he said.

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would be enhanced, the brigade would need to expand to around 15,000 men, requiring additional recruitment from Nepal, which has said that, in principle it has no objection to the idea.

If the proposal were to go ahead, the brigade would need to expand to around 15,000 men, requiring additional recruitment from Nepal, which has said that, in principle it has no objection to the idea.

The brigade would be funded by the U.N. and be on call to the U.N., but based and trained in the U.K., the brigadier said.

"I cannot envisage, given the right equipment and training, any job which couldn't be undertaken by the Gurkhas."

If the unit needed other facilities, like heavy armour, this could come from other British units who often will have worked and trained with the Gurkhas as part of their regular duties, he said.

"Britain is good at providing military forces," particularly highly professional, small combined arms task forces, he said, "so why don't we market our ability?"

It would also be cheaper for the United Nations by providing a "package deal."

At the moment because of financial constraints the army has had to cut units to en-

hance others. Providing these units for the United Nations alongside the Gurkhas could change that, Brig. Lee explained. "If you can enhance without cutting someone else... surely this is to our benefit."

The brigade is currently being cut back in size of 2,500 men from about 6,500, partly because of cutbacks in defence by Britain but also because their base of more than 40 years, Hong Kong, is due to revert to China in 1997.

But the brigadier admitted there could be problems as other countries might not like the idea.

As troops on U.N. missions are paid for by the world body "many countries get hard currency from seconding troops to the U.N.," he said, and in the case of poorer countries they might well not want to lose an important source of revenue.

Other countries might also feel that their troops could miss out on the experience provided by a peacekeeping mission, Brig. Lee added.

"While in principle it's a good idea, in practice there are difficulties," he said.

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Other countries might also feel that their troops could miss out on the experience provided by a peacekeeping mission, Brig. Lee added.

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Heidi Fleiss in shock after convictions

LOS ANGELES (R) — Heidi Fleiss, the so-called Hollywood madam, was facing a minimum of three years in jail Saturday after being found guilty of providing prostitutes to undercover police officers posing as Japanese businessmen. But Ms. Fleiss, whose potential "black book" revelations of rich and famous clients sent a wave of near-panic through Hollywood studio executive suites, was found not guilty of supplying cocaine to the detectives. In a telephone interview with the Los Angeles Times from her father's home shortly after the verdicts, Ms. Fleiss said, "I'm still in shock. My heart has never beaten so fast. I heard them say guilty on the first count, and then I just couldn't hear anymore. I just went blank."

As the verdicts were read out by the jury forewoman Friday, Ms. Fleiss was visibly upset, laying her head on the defense table and slamming her hands down on the table.

"My father was crying," she told the Times. "He said, 'be strong and think of something positive,' but I can't even think." Ms. Fleiss's list of clients remained secret, but tinseltown's dirty linen could still be washed in public when she faces federal charges of laundering the proceeds of her allegedly lucrative call-girl ring in a number of secret bank accounts.

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pean Currency Unit (\$8.47 billion) to be made available over five years to help the Easterners prepare for membership were put off last week after southern EU states essentially demanded more money to help development in North Africa and the Middle East.

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The Eastern leaders are likely to be equally dis-

appointed when it comes to money.



Russian paratroopers train in a field camp in Beslan in Northern Ossetia. This airborne unit was flown in several days ago and deployed some 50 kilometres from the border

'with the breakaway Chechen Republic. The Russians have concentrated "three large groups" in the region for intervention if political talks fail (AFP photo)

Khasbulatov quits Chechnya as Russia troops gather

GROZNY, Russia (R) — A key Chechen opposition figure, former Russian parliament Chairman Ruslan Khasbulatov, abruptly left the breakaway Russian region Sunday as Moscow's troops massed threateningly on its borders.

"He has left the Chechen Republic," his brother Yannikhan Khasbulatov told reporters in the Khasbulatov home and political base at Tolstoi-Yurt, adding that Ruslan had returned to Moscow.

A statement by Ruslan Khasbulatov, obtained by Reuters Sunday, said he was leaving because the appearance of Russian troops at the frontier had made a nonsense of what he styles his peacekeeping activities.

"Russia is bringing in troops. As you know I was always against this development in events," Mr. Khasbulatov's Saturday statement said. "I think we can settle the conflict ourselves."

"My role has been made superfluous, the role of an

observer of events which I can no longer influence... and so the four-month activities of the peacekeeping group has been brought to nothing."

"In these conditions I must take a very difficult but in my view the only right decision — to break off my activity and return to Moscow."

Mr. Khasbulatov, briefly imprisoned in Moscow last year after defeat in a political struggle with President Boris Yeltsin, moved back to his ethnic homeland this summer to mediate between its nationalist government and Moscow-backed opposition.

But he quickly threw his lot in with the opposition, denouncing the separatist government of Chechen President Dzhokhar Dudayev as a "dictatorial regime."

Moscow recognises the opposition Provisional Council of Mr. Khasbulatov's ally Umar Avtukhanov as the official government of Chechnya.

Events in Chechnya have taken a turn for the worse in recent weeks, with fighting intensifying around the mountain region. Russia

threatened Tuesday to clamp down hard if Mr. Dudayev's men and their opponents did not lay down their arms by Thursday.

Although Russia has admitted to no military action since then, the opposition says unidentified planes which bombed the capital Grozny Thursday night were Russian and large numbers of Moscow troops are being moved up to the Chechen frontier.

Nineteen Russian soldiers are being held by the Chechen government after being captured fighting with the opposition. Moscow says they are "volunteers," but two prisoners freed Saturday said they had been seconded to Chechnya by Russian counterintelligence.

On Sunday, he said three more columns advanced from Chermen in North Ossetia region, equipped with heavy mortars, armoured personnel carriers and trucks full of ammunition.

To reach Chechnya, Russian troops would have to pass through tiny Ingushetia region, whose people are ethnic kin of the Chechens and fiercely opposed to Mr. Yeltsin. Ingush President Ruslan Aushev said Ingush would not let them through. "We will not let (Russian) troops, tanks and ammunition pass through our territory," he told Reuters Television in a Sunday interview in his regional capital, Nazran.

Mr. Avtukhanov said Russian troops would enter Chechnya on Dec. 15 and tried to convince opposition supporters that Moscow was acting in their best interest.

"Alone, we cannot get rid of Dudayev," he said. "Russia is aware that we can't do anything without the assistance of a third party and is therefore coming to help us."



Their Kalachnikovs resting on a radiator and in the presidential palace in Grozny (AFP photo)

Leaders gather for European security summit

BUDAPEST (R) — Faced with chaos in Bosnia, leaders from across Europe gather Sunday for a security summit aimed at preventing more Yugoslav-style conflicts on a divided and increasingly troubled continent.

U.S. President Bill Clinton, Russian President Boris Yeltsin and some 50 European leaders are supposed to draw up a blueprint for security at the meeting which starts Monday.

But divisions over how to end the bloodshed in Bosnia and Russia's problems in dealing with the conflicts of the post-cold war world threaten to disrupt the two-day summit of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE).

Mr. Yeltsin, uneasy about NATO's plans to take in some Eastern European states and worried that Russia could be isolated, was due to arrive later Sunday with most other European leaders.

Mr. Clinton will fly in Monday and stay just a few hours.

The summit will adopt a weighty document called "towards a genuine partnership in a new era," committing all to reducing tensions and respecting minorities and human rights, while laying out plans for the prevention of crisis and future arms control.

"We are determined to give a new political impetus to the CSCE, thus enabling it to play an essential role in meeting the challenges of the 21st century," says the document, a draft of which was obtained by Reuters.

But the ideals of providing equal security for all and preventing new aggression have been shattered by the failure to end the war in Bosnia and the return of conflict to other areas of the continent, particularly the former Soviet Union.

The CSCE, widely criticised as an unwieldy talking shop since it can take action only if all parties agree, may decide at the summit to send a multinational peacekeeping force to police a ceasefire in the troubled enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh.

In addition, Ukraine will formally renounce nuclear weapons at the conference, bringing a long-running dispute over the fate of the former Soviet atomic arsenal to an end and paving the way for delayed implementation of superpower arms cuts.

But it is the wrangling over Bosnia which is likely to dominate. Major in the five-year "contact group" trying to broker peace may meet here after talks in Serbia.

Bosnia and Croatia, who hope for a meeting with the contact group in Budapest, are angry at the United Nations and NATO for failing to defend the BiH enclave from Serb assaults. The rump Yugoslav state, suspended from the CSCE, is not present.

Russia, already uneasy over previous NATO air strikes in Bosnia, has vetoed a U.N. plan to make sure fuel does not get through to the Bosnian Serbs and is also struggling with the rebellious region of Chechnya and other conflicts.

Knowing it has little

chance of joining NATO and fearing isolation, Russia has proposed beefing up the CSCE and turning it into the dominant European security organisation — thus giving Moscow a major say in all decisions.

But Western allies, although anxious to reassure Russia as they prepare to take Eastern European nations into NATO, have blocked those proposals and the summit is likely to approve only a modest strengthening of the CSCE's role.

Moscow also wants the summit to give it a mandate for peacekeeping in areas such as Georgia and Tajikistan but does not want the meeting to discuss the growing crisis in Chechnya, which is considered an internal affair.

Other countries are insisting that Russia accepts international monitoring and checks on peacekeeping missions.

"It is not in the West's interest to leave Russia to itself when it comes to conflicts in the former Soviet Union," said German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel last week.

Russia could block the proposal to send a 3,000-strong multinational peacekeeping force to Nagorno-Karabakh, because it is wary of other countries' involvement and CSCE monitoring.

If the force is approved, it would mark the first CSCE military operation and boost its flagging credibility.

Born out of a 1975 Helsinki conference, the CSCE is

largely a forum for discussion on human rights and the protection of minorities and borders. It has also sent small missions to help relieve tension in some regions.

CSCE officials complain that its conflict prevention role is not appreciated and that its value lies in linking every European state with the United States and Canada — unlike the more exclusive Western clubs of NATO and the European Union.

Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma is scheduled to sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) during the summit in Budapest in return for what diplomats say are strictly limited assurances to protect Ukraine from aggression.

Russia, the United States, France and Britain — four of the world's five declared nuclear powers — are expected to give the assurances in a security memorandum for Ukraine.

When the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991 four republics inherited its nuclear arsenals on their territories.

Ukraine has accepted in principle it should become a non-nuclear state but has held out for security and economic guarantees, delaying implementation of major arms cuts agreed by Washington and Moscow before the Soviet collapse.

Monday's signing ceremonies on the fringe of the CSCE effectively clear up nuclear problems surrounding the successor states to Soviet Union and allow the START-I treaty to be implemented three years after it was agreed.

Britain, France launch last ditch Bosnia peace drive

SARAJEVO (Agencies) — Britain and France launched a last-ditch diplomatic drive to end the war in Bosnia Sunday but neither the Serbs nor the Muslim-led Bosnian government seemed willing to compromise.

British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd and French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe were due to meet Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic in Belgrade in the hope that he can exert more pressure on Serbs in Bosnia to accept peace.

Mr. Milosevic's influence over the Bosnian Serbs has diminished since he cut military and political ties with his former protégés last August in exchange for an easing of international sanctions against Belgrade.

Under the contact group peace plan, the Serbs would have to roll back from the 70 per cent of Bosnia they control after 32 months of fighting to a position where they hold 49 per cent. The Muslim-Croat federation would get the rest.

Mr. Hurd has issued a warning that the United Nations peacekeeping force could be pulled out of Bosnia within weeks if there is no settlement.

"We have some weeks. I hope, unless something disastrous further occurs on the ground, and we have to use them," Mr. Hurd said on BBC television Saturday night.

In order to get the Serbs back to the negotiating table, we accept it. Karadžić's Serbs refuse it. This mission to Belgrade is not clear to us it is just buying more time.

"We have never objected to links for Serbs and Serbia but these links should not question our sovereignty and the integrity of our country... I'm afraid that we at the legal government have no authority to participate in that."

Mr. Hurd's threat to pull out the peacekeepers is the most explicit for some time, any such operation is fraught with danger and would probably require the intervention of a large NATO force to shield the withdrawal.

United Nations Secretary-General Boutros Ghali has disclosed that contingency planning with NATO for a possible pull-out of the U.N. force from Bosnia is well under way.

Dr. Ghali said he had been told by Russia, Britain, France, Spain and Canada that they would withdraw their U.N. troops if the Security Council voted to lift an international arms embargo in favour of the Muslim-run Bosnian government.

It had been agreed at a

meeting in Geneva last June with his military commanders in the region to prepare for such an eventuality. "I can tell you that the project is quite advanced and has been agreed with NATO," he added.

Observers in Bosnia generally agree that a withdrawal of the U.N. Protection Force would be a militarily humiliating exercise that would in addition spell the end of the international humanitarian effort.

Meanwhile, the former Turkish army chief of staff said Turkey sent arms to the Muslim-led Bosnian government in violation of an international embargo.

However, "90 per cent" of the arms were seized by Croatia and never reached Bosnia, Gen. Dogan Gures told the Istanbul newspaper Hurriyet in an interview published Sunday.

Gen. Gures did not give any other details and it was not clear if the shipments continued. Gen. Gures retired from the Turkish military's top post in August.

It's long been rumoured that Turkey was arming Bosnia's outgunned government. Turkey has historical ties with Bosnian Muslims who converted to Islam under Ottoman rule in the Balkans.

Gen. Gures was also quoted as saying he believed a Turkish ship was ordered to stop monitoring the international arms embargo in the Adriatic Sea following a similar decision by the United States last month.

Berlusconi questioning faces further delay

ROME (R) — Several thousand demonstrators joined rallies in support of Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi Sunday while Milan magistrates who want to question him for alleged corruption learned they must wait at least another week.

Mr. Berlusconi's spokesman Jas Gawronski confirmed that the prime minister planned to meet prosecutors from Milan's elite "mani pulite" (clean hands) anti-graft team but said Mr. Berlusconi would not be available until Dec. 13.

Centre-left opposition candidates were expected to prosper in mayoral elections Sunday in 49 towns throughout the country after a first round of voting two weeks ago in which Mr. Berlusconi's Forza Italia party took a drubbing.

"We think that there were three attackers who had been turned away from the door earlier in the night and came back later," Tommy Karlholm of the Stockholm Police told Reuters.

Witnesses from the Sture Compagniet Club said they could identify one of the attackers and armed police went to an address in the city's southern suburbs during the morning.

LUANDA (R) — Negotiators from the Angolan rebel movement UNITA arrived in the capital Luanda Sunday to discuss implementing the latest peace agreement, state radio said.

The radio said the three-member UNITA team, headed by former UNITA representative in London Elias Samakhuwa, arrived in Luanda on a U.N. aircraft. It identified the other

members as Brigadier Chassaha and Lieutenant-Colonel Castello.

They are due to take part in a meeting of a new Joint Political and Military Commission, set up by the government and UNITA to oversee implementation of the peace pact signed at the Zambian capital Lusaka on Nov. 28.

Mr. Samakhuwa told the radio: "Our presence here, will surely be the greatest

Rebels in Luanda to discuss accord

signal we can give of our commitment to the peace process."

The delegation was originally expected in Luanda at the start of last week.

The situation around the country is still a bit tense despite the accords already signed and we can't bring together all the members of the delegation... that is the only reason for our delay," said Mr. Samakhuwa.

Three men who sprayed the upmarket club with automatic gunfire shortly after 5:00 a.m. (0400 GMT) had probably been refused entrance earlier, they added.

"We think that there were three attackers who had been turned away from the door earlier in the night and came back later," Tommy Karlholm of the Stockholm Police told Reuters.

Billy Linder, aged 30, said he was standing outside "the Sture" and chatting to a friend at around five o'clock.

The guy shot straight into the lobby. He was just spraying bullets and not saying anything. It lasted for maybe 45 seconds. He was blonde and had short hair."

Police said two men were killed at the nightclub and restaurant complex, popular among the young, fashionable set, in Stockholm's wealthy Ostermalm area.

A third victim, a young woman shot in the head, was dead on arrival at hospital.

Ambulances, passers-by and taxis that rushed to the scene described the doorway and steps of the club as littered with injured and shocked people.

Eyewitness Kurt, 23, said:

"I saw the man turn up. He was holding the automatic weapon at his hip and shot wildly in among people."

El, 29, a former Israeli soldier on holiday in Sweden, said he was standing about two metres from the gunman.

"I ran as soon as I heard shots. I recognised the sound because I have experience of it, but most people stood still without taking cover when he fired a second salvo."



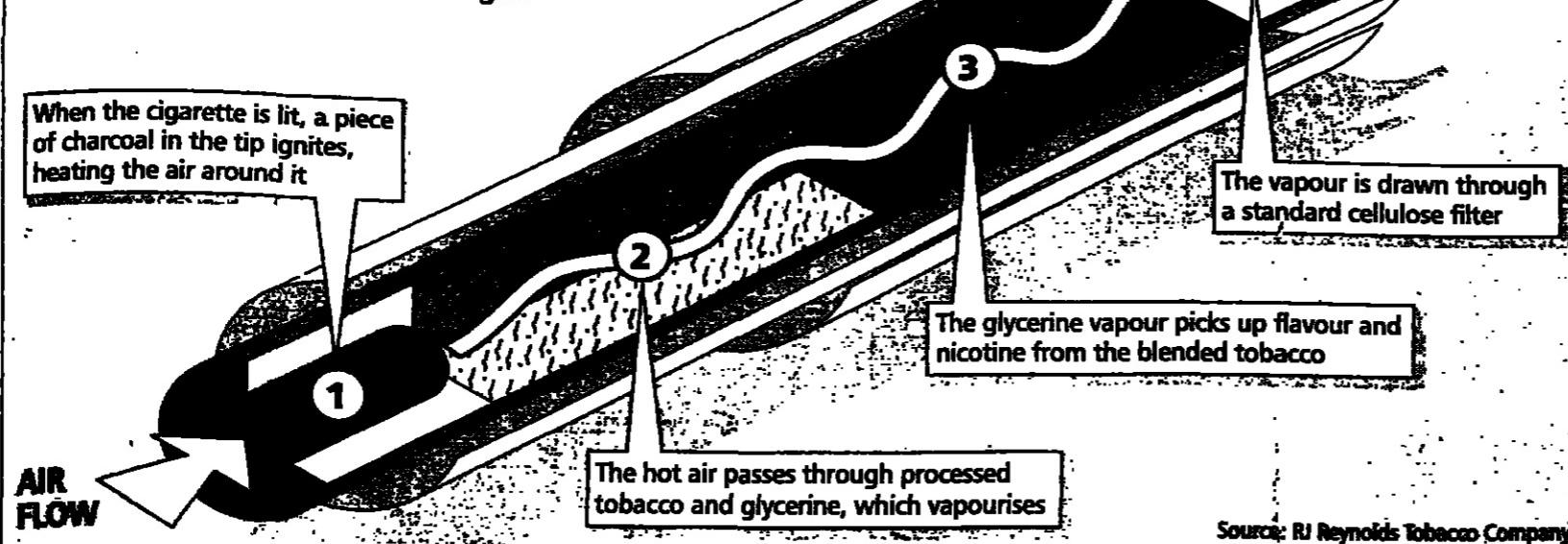
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Features

HOW THE NEW CIGARETTE WORKS

Smokers who have tested the new cigarette, which will be marketed under the brand name Eclipse, say its taste is similar to a standard cigarette, but that it is harder to draw on and harder to light.



Source: RJ Reynolds Tobacco Company

'Healthy' drag keeps nicotine hot on draw

By Peter Pringle

THE UNITED States tobacco industry, faced with increasingly hostile attacks from anti-smoking groups and suits from the victims of smoking, is about to launch a "reduced risk" cigarette of the kind which failed miserably six years ago because smokers did not like its flavour.

The new cigarette eliminates most of the cancer-causing tars, has almost no smoke or ash and the inoffensive odour of burning weeds, according to the RJ Reynolds company which will market the new cigarette next year.

Even so, the cigarette is likely to attract severe criticism from anti-smokers because it contains as much nicotine as regular cigarettes, and will be equally addictive.

And if the U.S. government ever succeeds in declaring nicotine as addictive a drug as cocaine or heroine, then all cigarettes, including the new one, would be regulated and the nicotine content greatly reduced.

RJ Reynolds, America's second largest tobacco company with 30 per cent of the U.S. cigarette market, has christened the brand Eclipse, hoping it will shun out the competition, especially from the nation's largest tobacco company, Philip Morris, which has 42 per cent of the \$50bn trade and will soon be launching its own "safer" cigarette.

The difference in the new brand is at the lighted end. The first half-inch of the cigarette is a piece of charcoal wrapped in a fibreglass insulator. Once alight, the charcoal burns at 900°C — about the same as the flame on a regular cigarette — but because it is enclosed in the insulator it does not ignite the tobacco.

Instead, as the smoker draws in air, the charcoal superheats the air which passes over the tobacco in the cigarette, carrying the flavour and the nicotine. The air passes through a filter in the normal way. But there is little if any smoke and the cigarette does not burn down

In 1968, RJ Reynolds introduced another so-called "safer cigarette" under the brand name Premier, but smokers rejected it. In the 1970s, the British-American

Tobacco Company test-marketed a cigarette in Britain called Planet, that was made of tobacco substitute. It was never put on sale.

The Eclipse brand has been tested by RJ Reynolds for more than a year and, according to the company, has scored highly among smokers, their non-smoking spouses and family members. The company claims more than 80 per cent of both groups say Eclipse is a breakthrough.

However, a spokesman for the Food and Drug Administration which regulates drugs has not yet reviewed the data. And one of the key anti-smoking politicians in the U.S. Congress, Henry Waxman of California, said the new cigarette "may have the advantage of being safer, relatively speaking, but it still delivers nicotine."

In the Republican turnover in the mid-term elections, Mr. Waxman lost his chairmanship of the House of Representatives subcommittee on health and the

environment that has been in the forefront of attacks on the tobacco companies. It held intrusive hearings into the companies' secret research on the dangers of smoking. Now, with the Republicans in charge, there will be no more hearings and fewer embarrassments for the tobacco industry.

But several class action suits continue. Two states, Mississippi and Florida, are suing the tobacco companies for medical expenses the states have paid out to victims of smoking disorders.

There are a number of outstanding suits against the tobacco companies, alleging that they knowingly misrepresented the dangers of tobacco and the addictiveness of nicotine.

The industry acknowledges an uphill struggle in keeping sales buoyant at home. But abroad, American tobacco companies are making great inroads into the Russian, Chinese and south-east Asian Markets.

The Independent

Italy's loan sharks exact stiff retribution

By Melanie Goodfellow

Reuter

ROME — They may not bounce your cheques but Italy's loan sharks have far more sinister methods of exacting payment — from rape and assault to destroying your life.

Known as "strozzini", literally stranglers, the illegal moneylenders charge interest of up to 500 per cent and, according to some estimates, rake in more than \$10 billion a year.

Last year, victims' groups say, they managed to ensnare more than two million Italians in a vicious circle of debt.

The Italian media is saturated with the harrowing accounts of those who failed to pay up on time — suicides and ruin.

Last month, one victim, shrouded in shadow to disguise her identity, told television viewers how she was abducted, raped and warned that the same thing would happen to her daughter if she did not repay her debts within 24 hours.

The woman's case is now the subject of a criminal inquiry.

She once owned three shops — two of which she was forced to sell — and

began by borrowing 10 million lire (\$6,200).

"The 10 million became 54 million (\$36,000)," she said.

The majority of those who fall into the clutches of the moneymen are small business people struggling to pay off debts as Italy comes out of its worst recession in 50 years.

According to one survey, compiled by the Confindustria's expert on organised crime, one in three people running small businesses had considered borrowing from loan sharks.

They usually start out borrowing a fairly modest amount of about 15 million lire (\$9,500) but this can increase as much as five-fold as lending rates are progressively bumped up.

"Usury is a tradition in Italy," said Lino Busa, who runs a confidential helpline for the victims of usury for Confesercenti, an organisation for small business.

One woman arrested on suspicion of usury in Sicily, a 70-year-old Giuseppina Cipollina, had \$800 million lire (\$500,000) stuffed under her mattress when police searched her home in October.

"I'm sure I did nothing wrong. I really think I helped a lot of people who needed money," Ms. Cipollina told

reporters.

The traditional figure of the neighbourhood usurer is fast dying out.

Over the past few years the business has been infiltrated by organised crime groups. For them, usury is primarily a means of laundering the proceeds from other illegal activities," said Mr. Busa.

Sergio Bille, Confindustria's expert on organised crime, estimated that 60 per cent of usury was run by organised crime and a fast way for gangsters to take over legitimate businesses when borrowers could not repay their debts.

"In 1992, organised criminals were able to take control of hundreds upon hundreds of bars, restaurants and shops through usury," he said. "They often leave the original owners in place as front men."

Consumer association Adusbet estimated that usury had a turnover of some 15 trillion lire (\$9.5 billion) in 1993.

Many usury victims blame the banks, which they say force them to turn to loan sharks because of their reluctance to lend to small concerns.

"Banks aren't interested in arranging small loans. They

prefer those in the 500 million (\$350,000) league which involve the same amount of work but yield a lot more," said Luciano Violante, a former chairman of Italy's Anti-Mafia Commission.

Mr. Violante, a parliamentarian for the opposition Democratic Party of the left, told an anti-usury conference in Turin: "If banks paid more time to the small creditors the phenomenon of usury would be halved."

Italian banks have also had their fingers burnt by the recent recession.

"People who go to usurers are generally those who do

not have their accounts in order," the Association of Italian Banks said in a report.

"Banks should not be blamed for not giving financial help to those who do not deserve credit."

The government, increasingly concerned by usury and a spate of usury-related suicides and acts of violence, is trying to pass an anti-usury law.

A draft law which would fix a top interest rate and set a penalty of up to five years in jail for anyone found guilty of illegal money lending was approved by the cabinet in September and now has to be passed by parliament.

The Independent

Nation of tea-drinkers needs to drink more

By Maggie Fox

Reuter

LONDON — Illyd Lewis sniffs his tea suspiciously before taking a sip of the pale, weak brew.

"Ha" he gasps. "We are living up to our reputation of brewing the worst cup of tea in Britain."

As spokesman for the Tea Council, which promotes tea as "Britain's national drink," Mr. Lewis says that not only his own office, but tea shops,

restaurants and hotels must improve the tea on offer to woo Britons back to their favourite brew.

"Soft drinks and alcohol are muscling in on this drinks market. It is a finite market and something has to give," Mr. Lewis said in an interview.

The Tea Council is trying to counter this trend with a new guide to approved tea shops and a newly formed guild of tea shops meant to

encourage high standards.

Despite imports made by fizzy drinks, Britons still drink far more tea than any other Westerners — an average of 1,355 cups per person a year compared to 154 in the United States, 642 in Australia and 290 in the Netherlands.

Britons drink about 200 ml drinks a day, excluding water, and more than three of those are cups of tea. Coffee, soft drinks and alcohol account for four.

"We can't really counter the cokes of this world," said Mr. Lewis. But he says tea — and by this he means real tea, not herb or fruit "teas" — offers something no other drink does.

"It is a complete occasion if you are taking proper tea. If it is how the tea is presented, the options, the China, the ambience," he explained.

"If you take tea out of a lovely cup as opposed to a mug, it's very hard to say it

doesn't taste different."

He sniffs: "Brewing in a mug is one of those things that happens." But most Britons make and drink their tea at home, preferring a "cuppa" they can depend on to the vagaries of the market-place.

To encourage them to venture out and consume more tea, the Tea Council is inspecting tea shops and classifying them according to service, ambience and, of course, tea quality.

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JORDAN TIMES, MONDAY, DECEMBER 5, 1994

The CSCE — what it is and how it works

BUDAPEST (R) — Leaders of the 53-nation Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) meet in Budapest on Monday for a two-day summit. Here is a brief account of the CSCE's history, objectives and role:

Created in the early 1970s as a forum for East-West dialogue, the CSCE includes all European states, the United States and Canada — stretching from Vancouver to Vladivostok and covering much of the northern hemisphere.

It started with 35 members but the collapse of the Soviet Union swelled its ranks. It now includes 53 nations, although the membership of the rump Yugoslav state has been confirmed.

The Helsinki agreements remained little more than paper accords until the collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989.

A CSCE summit in Paris in 1990 unveiled a "charter for a new Europe," declaring that the organisation could now truly play a role in fostering justice, peace and prosperity.

The CSCE, which has no military structure or armed forces of its own, works to ease tensions and help prevent conflicts.

It can act only if all members agree and this principle of consensus has brought charges that it is unwieldy and ineffective. But it is the only security body to include all states in Europe and link them with North America.

A 1975 Helsinki summit agreed guidelines for the behaviour of governments, covering security issues, human rights and the principle that borders should not be changed by force.

Western governments claimed the conference was important because the Soviet bloc had signed human rights commitments, while communist states felt their legitimacy and borders had been confirmed.

The Helsinki agreements remained little more than paper accords until the collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989.

A CSCE summit in Paris in 1990 unveiled a "charter for a new Europe," declaring that the organisation could now truly play a role in fostering justice, peace and prosperity.

The CSCE, which has no

Another summit in 1992, again in Helsinki, called for the CSCE to take a more active role in managing and preventing crises in Europe, including peacekeeping.

Against the backdrop of the war in former Yugoslavia, Europe's military organisations — NATO and the Western European Union (WEU) — said they were ready to take on peacekeeping missions if the CSCE gave them a mandate.

So far, this has not happened. Instead, the United Nations has taken the lead in crises such as Bosnia.

The CSCE also has a secretary-general and a high commissioner for national minorities. A committee of officials meets every week in Vienna to discuss key issues. Summits are held every two years. Foreign ministers meet annually.

The CSCE has helped coordinate the enforcement of U.N. sanctions against the rump Yugoslav state and sent small missions to help ease tensions in the Baltic republics, Tajikistan, Georgia, Moldova, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Ukraine.

New sea disasters increase pressure on safety talks

By Clelia Ozier

Reuter

LONDON — Recent maritime disasters, including one in Manila Bay on Friday, have intensified pressure on officials at London talks next week to set new standards of safety on the high seas.

The panel would also consider measures to improve a ferry's ability to stay upright if water gets onto the vast car deck, such as costly bulkheads.

IMO spokesman Roger Kohn said it would be too early to examine the Achille Lauro case in detail and the same can be expected to apply to the Cebu City, lost in Manila Bay.

"Nobody will know what exactly happened," he said of the Achille Lauro. "But the ship was built and maintained according to IMO standards."

Concern over ro-ro safety is not new. Standards were raised in 1988 after Britain's Herald of Free Enterprise capsized in 1987, killing 193 people, when a bow door was left open.

An original Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) convention was adopted in 1914 after Britain called an international conference on the loss of the Titanic. Called "unsinkable," it struck an Atlantic iceberg and sank with the loss of 1,500 lives.

The latest version of the convention dates to 1974 with a series of later amendments. It could now see major revisions.

It will consider amendments to a 1978 international convention of standards for training, certification and watchkeeping for seafarers which is regarded out of date.

A revised text is expected to enter into force in 1997.

IMO has also emphasised the need for further action for the safety of bulk cargo carriers, some of which it said were lost without trace with no time to send out distress messages.

Last year it granted a consultative status to the International Association of Dry Cargo Shipowners (Intercargo), which proposed measures to reduce bulk carrier losses.

Thousands of illegal workers leave Saudi Arabia

DUBAI (R) — Thousands of illegal foreign workers, mostly Asians, are being forced out of Saudi Arabia after the kingdom told all illegal immigrants to leave by mid-December or face punishment and fines.

Diplomats said most were labourers working in construction, small shops, and other jobs normally shunned by Saudis.

The kingdom has given them a month until Dec. 18 to leave in an unprecedented crackdown against illegal workers among an expatriate community which accounts for four million of Saudi Ara-

bia's 17 million residents. Police are checking the papers of Asians in the streets and have threatened not only to fine them but also punish those who shelter or employ them, the diplomats said.

Foreign embassies said many were leaving of their own accord but others caught were straining the embassies' abilities to handle the exit procedures.

Some embassies said in many cases they also have to provide air fares because workers are penniless.

The Pakistani embassy is processing the exist papers of

300 people a day on average since the Saudi order came into effect on Nov. 18, officials said.

The Indian embassy has been processing 175 people, the Bangladesh embassy 100, and the Philippines embassy said it has more than 300 applicants who want to leave.

Bangladeshi diplomats expected 25,000, out of 500,000 Bangladeshi working in Saudi Arabia would leave by the end of the grace period.

It is a usual practice in Saudi Arabia to issue a warning to people who overstay to leave, especially those who stay after performing pilgrim-

age to Mecca," one diplomat said. "But this time it is more tough and it involves a wider range of workers."

The diplomats said the interior ministry classified as illegal workers people who stay behind after their visas expired and those no longer working for their original sponsors.

Expatriates can only work in the kingdom if they are sponsored by a Saudi citizen or company.

Diplomats said expatriates in many cases pay a fee to a local sponsor who obtained their legal papers and then they go and work for other

people or start their own businesses.

Others illegally quit their original sponsors for higher wages elsewhere or because of disputes with their employers.

The diplomats said the ministry had said it will not only fine and deport those who break those rules, but would also heavily fine their original sponsors and current employers.

Saudi newspapers quoted businessmen as saying the deportations would create job opportunities for Saudis at a time when the government is

trying to encourage a bigger role for its citizens in the labour force.

Many Asians who had opened small shops catering for their own communities were having to shut down and leave because their papers were not in order.

"They (the authorities) are very serious about implementing this. The police are checking people's papers in all major cities. Those without the legal papers are taken to deportation centres, their papers put in order and then they leave," one diplo-

mat said.

against communism among certain high-ranking officials both in the White House and on Capitol Hill.

"This outmoded, biased attitude is reflected in the current GATT reentry negotiations, with U.S. officials attempting to force China into accepting the American political and economic system outright," Business Weekly said.

GATT members, especially the United States, are concerned about China's import and export licensing system, copyright protection, different treatment for foreign and local firms, restricted access to foreign exchange and unpublished regulations on trade and other issues.

China argues it has already worked hard to reform its huge and lumbering economy and its status as a developing country should be taken into consideration.

"After prolonged negotiations of more than eight years, China's GATT access is entering a critical stage with the U.S. emerging as the main obstacle," the Business Weekly quoted Mr. Yu as saying.

China, potentially one of the world's top trade powers, argues it must be allowed time to adjust its economy and trade policies, governed by rigid Stalinist-style state controls until the ambitious market-oriented reforms of paramount leader Deng Xiaoping began to take effect in the mid-1980s.

China is keen to be back in the GATT by the end of the year to become a founder member of the WTO.

China accuses U.S. over stalled bid to join GATT

BEIJING (R) — Beijing ac-

used the United States Sun-

day of blocking its bid for

GATT entry, saying

Washington was prejudiced

against China because it is

ruled by communists, and

ignoring the achievements of

its market reforms.

"Disregarding China's market-oriented reforms, (the United States) insists

that China's economy is still a planned one because the

country is led by communists," Yu Peiwei, a researcher at the ministry of foreign trade and economic cooperation, told Business Weekly in a front-page interview.

Mr. Yu accused Washington of playing a sophisticated economic and psychological game with China by imposing excessive demands on Beijing's bid for reentry to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) which it quit soon after the Communist Party took power in 1949.

Trade remained the main beneficiary, receiving 27.2 billion dirhams (\$7.41 billion) by the end of September. It was followed by the construction sector, where loans totalled 14.3 billion dirhams (\$3.95 billion).

Deposits grew to 79.9 billion dirhams (\$21.77 billion), from 75.1 billion dirhams (\$20.46 billion).

Shareholders' equity, which includes capital and reserves, rose to 20.3 billion dirhams (\$5.53 billion), from 18.6 billion dirhams (\$5.06 billion).

Bankers said the increase in shareholders' equity was due to central bank instructions to banks to raise their capital to meet adequacy requirements set by the Bank for International Settlement for banks worldwide.

The main opposition to China's entry has come from the United States, which insists it must come in as a developed country without the concessions granted to developing states.

The European Union has generally backed the U.S. stance.

Mr. Yu said the chief obstacle was what he called entrenched hostility

Non-oil sector in Arab Gulf states surges in four years

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The non-oil sector in Arab Gulf states surged by nearly 34 percent over the past four years as they pushed ahead with plans to lessen reliance on volatile crude exports, an officials study showed Monday.

From around \$101 billion in 1989, the non-oil sector in the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) jumped to \$136 billion in 1993, said the study by the Kuwait-based Organisation of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC).

The oil sector grew to \$73 billion from \$50.5 billion mainly due to a rise in crude production by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) which boosted output to offset a loss of more than four million barrels per day (b/d) following the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

The study, published in OAPEC's monthly bulletin, showed the non-oil sector in Saudi Arabia rose to \$86 billion from \$56.9 billion while the oil sector jumped to \$44 billion from \$24.2 billion.

Saudi Arabia is the biggest oil producer in the world, with output of around eight million b/d, nearly 12 percent of the global crude supplies.

Stung by weak oil prices, it has launched a drive to diversify its economy, with a focus on the industrial sector. Official figures showed the kingdom had invested nearly \$25 billion in more than 2,500 factories.

The diversification drives

in Saudi Arabia and other GCC states coupled with a steady decline in oil prices have sharply boosted the non-oil sector at the expense of the oil sector over the past 12 years.

During the oil boom of the late 1970s and early 1980s, oil was the dominant component of the GCC gross domestic product (GDP), standing at more than half.

The OAPEC study, obtained here, showed the non-oil sector in the UAE increased to \$21.8 billion in 1993 from \$17.3 billion in 1989, while it grew to around \$8 billion from \$4.7 billion in Oman, to \$4.9 billion from \$4.5 billion in Qatar, and to \$3.77 billion from around \$3 billion in Bahrain.

In Kuwait, the seven-month Iraqi occupation depressed the non-oil sector to \$12.8 billion from nearly \$15 billion.

The 10-nation OAPEC gave no breakdown for the non-oil sector but independent figures showed industry, trade and construction were dominating.

GCC industries are mainly light products like building materials, aluminium, chemicals, paper, foodstuff and home appliances.

Experts said they expected further growth in the non-oil sector as regional states have offered more incentives to the private sector as part of reforms to cushion the impact of low oil prices.

The six states produce around 13 million b/d.

It said private investments alone grew to 20.4 billion dirhams (\$5.58 billion) from 19.8 billion dirhams (\$4.98 billion), while government investment declined to 9.8 billion dirhams (\$2.67 billion) from 10 billion dirhams (\$2.72 billion), due to low oil prices.

The non-oil sector is expected to record an equivalent growth in 1994 while the oil sector will fall sharply because of lower crude and gas exports and weak oil prices in world markets.

Public investment and consumption were expected to stay at the same level but the private sector would probably grow faster than in 1993, the report added.

The balance of payments would probably register a deficit in 1994 for the first time due to lower revenues from crude and services and a sharp increase in imports of goods and services.

Oil provides more than 80

per cent of the UAE's income and a sharp decline in crude prices over the past decade has prompted it to introduce austerity measures to cut a budget deficit.

Oil prices have so far averaged around \$15.8 a barrel this year and are projected to be lower than in 1993, when they hit a five-year low of \$16.33. This will depress the UAE's revenues from their 1993 level of nearly \$1.3 billion dirhams (\$13.97 billion).

The growth in the UAE's private sector was reflected in banking, with increases in credits, deposits and capital.

Credits from the country's 47 banks surged by 13.1 percent to \$1.6 billion dirhams (\$5.53 billion), from 18.6 billion dirhams (\$5.06 billion).

Bankers said the increase in shareholders' equity was due to central bank instructions to banks to raise their capital to meet adequacy requirements set by the Bank for International Settlement for banks worldwide.

The central bank report showed credits to the private sector soared to \$3.1 billion dirhams (\$17.19 billion) from \$7 billion dirhams (\$15.53 billion).

Oil provides more than 80

income of about \$180 a head for a population of more than 20 million.

Most of its development budget comes from foreign donors, particularly Japan, as well as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

Mr. Adhikary said of 21 billion rupees (\$419 million) earmarked for development expenses for the fiscal year that began in mid-July, only two billion rupees (\$40 million) had been spent.

"We are open for foreign investment," the new finance minister said. "I invite foreign investors to come to Nepal. We will give them legal guarantees to repatriate their earnings and security for their capital."

Mr. Adhikary said he himself would hold talks with interested investors. "We want to open dialogue on what sort of atmosphere they want in Nepal for investment," he said.

He urged donors to observe the government before lending support. "We are telling them to watch our performance, evaluate our programmes and deal with us from issues to issues. If they are still doubtful, let them wait for two or three months and see our work."

Mr. Adhikary said the government would focus on providing basic services like water, health care and electricity.

The UML, he said, would protect private firms. "The state can never be a substitute for private enterprise," he said.

But he said the state needed to protect infant industries, especially those competing with neighbouring India, and any liberalisation moves should serve Nepal's interests.

Mr. Adhikary vowed to combat inflation. "We want to curb the corruption which in reality is obstructing the free play of market forces in determining prices," he said.

The government will set a ceiling on landholdings, giving property to peasants, and pay "individuals whose excess land will be seized" with shares in state firms, he said.

Mr. Adhikary, a lawyer and member of the commission which wrote the kingdom's constitution in 1990, acknowledged the minority communist government had little room for manoeuvre.

"We know the failures of the former Soviet Union," he said, adding that the ex-Soviet empire and China were not the only models of Marxism and Leninism. "We will translate our ideology to match the reality of our country."

Mr. Adhikary, a lawyer and member of the commission which wrote the kingdom's constitution in 1990, acknowledged the minority communist government had little room for manoeuvre.

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Business Daily Beat

A review
of economic news
from the Arabic press

Tunisia expects to earn \$1.3 billion from tourism

TUNIS (R) — Tunisia's earnings from tourism in 1994 compared to 1993 revenue of 1.113 billion dinars (\$1.113 million).

Hotel room tenancy also hit a record level, with 24.550 million nights spent by tourists in Tunisia's establishments from Jan. 1 to Nov. 14, 1994 against 21.923 million in the same previous-year period, the officials added.

They said the figure was for the period up to Oct. 10 and full year earnings are expected to be around 1.3 billion dinars (\$1.3 billion).

★ Due to weather conditions, the elections for the 20th board of directors of the Amman Chamber of Commerce have been postponed until Wednesday, Dec. 7, 1994. The elections were due to be held today (Monday) (Al Ra'i).

★ The 1995 budget for Jerash governorate totals JD47 million, of which JD37 million are earmarked for capital spending and the rest for recurrent expenditure (Sawt Al Shaab).

★ Dr. Samir Maqdisi, the delegated president to the American University of Beirut, will deliver a lecture on "The Arab Economy at the Auditorium of Abdul Hamid Shoman Foundation in Jabal Amman. The lecture is scheduled for Wednesday evening (Dec. 7) at 6 p.m. (Al Ra'i).

★ Although tomatoe exports to Israel are officially continuing, the reality is altogether the opposite as no such exports are taking place since the siege on Gaza was lifted few days ago. Having exported only 22 tonnes of tomatoe since the first shipment on Nov. 14, Jordanians could not compete with the price Gazans were selling their tomatoe. While Jordan sold its tomatoe for \$2 (JD1.4) a kilogramme, Israel could buy a kilogramme of Gaza tomatoe for only 500 fils. An official at the Agricultural Marketing Organisation denied that Israel had asked to import garlic and onions from Jordan and emphasised that tomatoe was the only product that Israel requested (Al Dustour).

★ Demand for gas cylinders has eased and the problem will be totally finished upon the arrival of 50,000 gas cylinders to the market over the coming few days. The price of a cylinder full of gas has reached JD28 while the price fixed by the Ministry of Supply is only JD18.050. As for the price of gas, an official at the Jordan Petroleum Refinery said there was absolutely no intention to raise the price of gas (Al Dustour).

★ The minister of post and communications received a performance bond for the mobile telephone project and a JD7 million cheque for licensing fees for the project (Al Aswag).

★ A Royal Decree has approved an amendment to the civil service regulations whereby a government employee can obtain six years of unpaid leave instead of four years as the old regulations specified. Another amendment states that employees in the higher grade category will be appointed, relieved or their service terminated by a Cabinet decision to be issued under a Royal Decree (Al Aswag).

★ The volume of subscription in new shares and stocks at the primary market of the Amman Financial Market (AFM) surpassed all expectations by reaching a record JD418.859 million in the first 10 months of the year compared to JD42.1 million for the whole of 1993 and JD59.6 million in 1992. Subscription in new shares floated by existing companies totalled JD151 million from January to October 1994 while new shares floated by newly established companies stood at JD253.4 million in the same period. Stocks and other debentures accounted for 3.7 per cent of the JD418.859 million total (Al Aswag).

★ The Council of Ministers has authorised a cut in the sales tax on local marble and granite from 20 per cent to seven per cent (Al Ra'i).

★ Spending on advertising in Jordan amounts to JD 13.3 million a year (Al Aswag).

★ An agreement was reached to hold a Jordanian commercial exhibition in the Eritrean capital of Asmara in 1995 (Al Aswag).

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Egyptian businessman employs six Israeli agricultural experts

CAIRO (AFP) — Businessman Sherif Al Magharabi has no qualms about breaking taboos. While the rest of his colleagues refused to deal with Israel, he decided in 1987 to plant Israeli bananas in the Egyptian desert.

"When you are a businessman, you have to break through the political and psychological barriers," Mr. Magharabi explained. "You can't refuse to deal with somebody on the pretext that several years ago Mordechai and Mohammad used to shoot at each other."

The wealthy businessman's cooperation with the Jewish state began with a banana plantation of 168 hectares (415 acres) in the Nubaria desert between Cairo and Alexandria.

Now he employs six Israeli experts who are "very well paid and speak perfect Arabic and English" on his plantation which he has called Bustan (Arabic for orchard).

Apart from bananas Magharabi cultivates 840 hectare (2,075 acres) of citrus fruits, 110 hectares (272 acres) of vines and 65 hectares (160 acres) of vegetables. He has invested \$30 million in his land.

"We signed a peace treaty and we are no longer enemies. Even our government uses their (Israel's) help in several industrial sectors," said Mr. Magharabi, 45, in his comfortable and sound-proofed office in the centre of Cairo.

"We went to Italy, Spain, Turkey, France, the United States and Morocco, but it was the Israelis who impressed us the most," the elegantly-dressed businessman said. "They have access to everything the world can offer in agricultural know-how. But their biggest asset is being able to plant in the desert. In Egypt we have

always cultivated fertile land on the banks of the Nile."

Israeli experts were "a natural choice," Mr. Magharabi said.

"The kings of the vine-growers are Italians and their slackness makes an exchange of technology very difficult.

"You have to face facts, the Israelis have access to information which nobody is supposed to export outside the country which came up with it. They get it from the Jewish diaspora, which gives them information to assuage their own feelings of guilt for not going to live in Israel," he said.

In early stages of the plantation, the Israeli experts followed precise instructions from their government.

"For security reasons they were forbidden from staying on the ground floor, and they could not stay in a hotel which had less than three stars," Mr. Magharabi said.

They could not sleep at the plantation even though their relationship with agricultural workers there were "excellent," he said. They also had to "stay visible all the time so the authorities could not accuse them of taking part in any shady activities."

Mr. Magharabi said his own government had never condemned him for his collaboration with Israel.

"On the contrary I have lost count of the number of people, from the government or others, who ask us for information given by the Israelis or to recommend them an expert," he said.

The banana-planter is optimistic about the future and believes one day Israel will have to buy certain products from Egypt like strawberries and green beans, "which require a huge amount of human labour and which are very expensive in Israel."

EU aims to forge closer Arab, Israeli business ties

CAIRO (AFP) — The European (EU) is aiming to help forge closer business ties between Israel and some of its Arab neighbours in a three-day conference opening here Tuesday.

Some 1,200 companies from Israel, Egypt, Jordan and the Palestinian self-rule territories as well as the EU will attend the forum "European Union-Middle East Partnership" which lasts until Wednesday.

"After peace is achieved, the future of the Middle East depends on the ability of the countries in the region to cooperate and do business," Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa's political advisor Nabil Fahmy said.

"Cooperation between small and middle sized ventures is very important in our region as large scale projects are rare," he said after a preparatory meeting for the forum on Wednesday.

The conference follows a ground-breaking summit held

in late October in Casablanca where heads of government, ministers and businessmen from the Arab countries and Israel discussed economic cooperation.

The European Commission delegation's head, Michael McGeever, said: "The idea was to do something different from political meetings, and to put those concerned in direct contact so they understand each other's needs."

Ten Egyptian ministers will attend the forum along with Israeli Trade and Industry Minister Micha Harisch and four members of the Palestinian self-rule authority including Nabil Shaath, "minister" for international cooperation.

Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Lebanon, Turkey and the United States will attend the conference as "visitors."

Egypt will have the largest representation with 137 firms, followed by Israel with 107, the Palestinians with 68,

and Jordan 48.

Alongside the European, small and middle sized ventures, giant groups like Germany's Daimler-Benz and Italy's Benetton will also be sending a delegation.

The meeting will aim to supply information and data considered "difficult to acquire" on maximising business opportunities.

Development projects for the Palestinian self-rule areas of Gaza and Jericho were the "most pressing" concerns because of the desperate lack of infrastructure in the territories, the organisers said.

Helping the Palestinians export goods and set in place a basic infrastructure for sewerage, communications, hospitals and schools were the areas of greatest potential for cooperation between the Palestinians, the EU and Arab countries.

The meeting will also look at ways of intensifying regional integration mainly in tourism and water resources.

Europe strongest magnet for U.S. business investment

NEW YORK (AFP) — Europe attracted the lion's share of U.S. business investment in 1993, according to a study published by consulting firm Ernst and Young.

Canada and Mexico were the next most popular countries for the 380 U.S. businesses who announced 709 investments in nearly 60 foreign countries that year, the study said.

Europe drew nearly two-thirds of the investment projects, or 434, in 1993.

Britain led the pack with 136 projects, due largely to a very favourable exchange rate.

France was runner-up, issuing 71 projects — a 34

per cent increase — because of "France's strategic location on the continent, its infrastructure, and welcoming attitude," Ernst and Young said.

Germany ranked third in Europe with 34 projects, and fifth worldwide behind Canada, with 47, and Mexico, with 38.

Mexico has benefited from the implementation of the North America Free Trade Agreement lowering trade barriers among the three neighbours, but investments in Canada plunged 45 per cent, the steepest decline found in the study.

New market openings also beckoned U.S. business in

Foreign Exchange Market Summary (November 28 - December 2, 1994)

AMMAN — The dollar appreciated sharply against the mark and yen and marginally against sterling at the end of last week. It ended the week 1.25 per cent higher against the mark, 1.80 per cent higher against the yen and 0.13 per cent higher against sterling.

The dollar rose at the beginning of the week against the mark and sterling while depreciating marginally against the yen. The dollar's rise came on the back of a New York blue chip stock rally for the second consecutive day, as the Dow Jones industrial average rose by 31.29 points to reach 3739.56. The dollar also benefited from dealers' expectations that the Norwegian referendum might result in rejecting Norway's joining the European Union.

The dollar continued its appreciation Tuesday on news that the U.S. consumer confidence index rose sharply by 12 points to 101.3 per cent its highest level since July 1990. Comments by the vice chairman of the Federal Reserve Bank, that the U.S. economy is witnessing strong growth, also contributed to the dollar's rise.

The dollar declined against sterling Wednesday, while stabilising against the yen and mark. Sterling's strength was attributed to dealers' expectations that Bank of England might increase its short term interest rates soon.

The dollar continued its decline against sterling Thursday, while it rose against the yen and mark. Most traders refrained from taking new positions ahead of U.S. employment figures due next day.

The dollar rose sharply against other major currencies at the end of the week. The dollar's appreciation was attributed to the release of U.S. November employment figures showing an increase of 350 thousand in Non-Farm Payrolls, compared to 164 thousand in October. The unemployment rate also declined to 5.6 per cent compared to 5.8 per cent the previous month. Analysis indicated that these figures triggered traders' speculation that the FOMC might increase U.S. short-term interest rates during its meeting on Dec. 20, 1994.

The U.S. unit, thus ended the week at 1.5800 marks, 100.61 yen and at \$1.5610 to sterling.

Euro-Currency Interest Rates^a

Currency	25/11/1994	2/12/1994
U.S. Dollar	5.31 6.43	5.81 6.75
Sterling Pound	5.37 6.75	5.50 6.37
Deutsche Mark	4.81 5.43	5.00 5.37
Swiss Franc	3.43 4.31	3.62 4.31
French Franc	5.31 6.12	5.31 6.12
Japanese Yen ^b	2.06 2.50	2.18 2.50

^aInterest bid rates for amounts exceeding 1,000,000 US dollars or equivalent.
^bInterest bid rates for amounts exceeding 1,000,000 Japanese Yen or equivalent.

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin Date: 4/12/1994

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.7030	0.7050
Sterling Pound	1.0955	1.1010
Deutsche Mark	0.4450	0.4472
Swiss Franc	0.5266	0.5292
French Franc	0.1296	0.1304
Japanese Yen ^b	0.6974	0.7009
Dutch Guilder	0.3970	0.3990
Swedish Krona	****	****
Italian Lira ^c	0.0433	0.0435

^bInterest bid rates for amounts exceeding 1,000,000 US dollars or equivalent.
^cInterest bid rates for amounts exceeding 1,000,000 Italian Lira or equivalent.

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Lebanese politicians trade charges in widening scandal

BEIRUT (Agencies) — Lebanese politicians are hurling accusations of corruption at each other in a blazing row over billionaire Prime Minister Rafik Al Hariri's decision to resign.

The bitter exchanges add new dimensions daily to a widening corruption scandal that threatens to engulf Lebanon's top politicians and former civil war chieftains.

After two years of thinly veiled allegations that his projects for rebuilding Lebanon are steeped in bribery and motivated by profiteering, Mr. Hariri lost patience last week and bluntly called his opponents hypocrites.

Announcing his resignation, he said those obstructing his efforts posed as crusaders against corruption "but it is not enough to speak out against corruption to become clean and honest."

"People can point out with their 10 fingers those who squandered public money and plundered private money, those who got rich from the pockets of the people, people's sweat and people's dignity," Mr. Hariri said.

Few Lebanese doubted he meant ex-militia leaders like Nabih Berri, his main political rival, who is speaker of parliament, most other ex-warlords also hold high office.

"None of them is above suspicion. All of them are under suspicion and all are on the list of the public's accusations," Mr. Hariri said.

That was an' oblique but telling reference to the trial of former Christian warlord Samir Geagea on post-war bombing and murder charges. Mr. Geagea is the first militia chief to be tried and there are suggestions that the others should be tried too.

Even wartime civilian leaders came under the spotlight as the Hariri row spread.

Leaping to Mr. Hariri's aid, President Elias Hrawi attacked his critics and said two prominent opponents of himself and the prime minister ought to be in jail for tax dodging.

Former Prime Minister Omar Karami and former Speaker Hussein Husseini — whose offices made them the highest Sunni Muslim and Shi'ite officers of the state — falsified property deals to avoid taxes, Mr. Hrawi said.

"If this happened in any other country in the world, whether backward or advanced, he who did it would go to jail," he added in a newspaper interview.

"But nonetheless Monsieur Karami lectures about being honest and straight. He even complains about restoration of the presidential

palace gardens."

When the two men threatened action, Mr. Hrawi told them to go right ahead.

Mr. Hrawi was himself touched by scandal on Nov. 24 when Parliamentary Deputy Yahya Shamas linked his son Roy, unnamed deputies, an unnamed minister, a businessman and 10 airline pilots to drug dealing.

The prosecutor-general has begun investigations.

Press reports said Mr. Hrawi offered to step down to defend his son, but he denied them and said:

"I am the one who want to reveal everything in front of the judiciary. I am not afraid of anything and if my son Roy is connected to any breach of the law, may God fall on his head."

Scandal also came close to Mr. Hariri on Nov. 30 when another deputy said lawmakers and politicians were bribed in 1991 to pass a law founding the Soldiers company rebuilding central Beirut.

Christian Deputy Najah Wakim said some politicians received shares worth \$1 million to help push through the law.

Soldiers is Mr. Hariri's brainchild and flagship of his national reconstruction programme.

Mr. Hariri has not submitted to President Hrawi a letter

of resignation, which aides said he planned to do this week.

Mr. Hrawi has said he will reject Mr. Hariri's resignation and the prime minister hinted Friday he might be willing to accept to form a new government if quarrelsome ministers were left out.

That left room for a settlement under the auspices of the Syrians despite the unprecedented name-calling and accusations flying all over the Lebanese political arena.

Mr. Hariri, who took office in October 1992, has been frustrated by opposition that has slowed down his economic and reconstruction policies.

His departure would be a severe setback to efforts to rebuild Lebanon from the destruction of the civil war.

His appointment had brought stability to the country's collapsing currency. His decision to quit quickly reflected on the money market Friday, requiring massive central bank intervention to stabilize the national currency, the pound.

The crisis in Lebanon, which is recovering from the devastation of disruption of the 1975-90 civil war, erupted Nov. 24 when Mr. Shamas fired accusations of corruption and drug trafficking against other politicians.



MILITARY TALK: Prime Minister and Minister of Defence Abdul Salam Majali Sunday meets with Chief of Staff of the Spanish Defence Force Lieutenant-General Jose Rodriguez, who is currently visiting the Kingdom. Dr. Majali and the Lt. Gen. Rodriguez discussed Jordanian-Spanish cooperation in military fields and the situation in the Middle East. They also discussed the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty and the need to meet the development needs of the region, stressing the importance of Europe's role in this regard. Lt.-Gen. Rodriguez was also received by His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah, commander of the Special Forces, and was briefed on duties assigned to the Special Forces. The Spanish military official watched drills with live ammunition as well as martial arts and free jump exercises (Petra photo)

COLUMN

FBI: Reported crimes in U.S. drop, except murder

WASHINGTON (AFP) — U.S. crime levels dropped in 1993 — except for murder rates — a downward trend also seen in 1992, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) said. Reported violent and property crimes fell 2.1 per cent last year to 14.1 million incidents, while murders rose to 24,530, a 3.2 per cent increase, according to an FBI report due out Sunday. The murder rate was 9.5 per 100,000 population, which marks a 2.2 per cent increase over 1992, but a rate lower than 1991 and the years from 1979 to 1981 when the rate fluctuated between 9.7 and 10.2. Violent crime for the first six months of 1994 was down four per cent with murders dropping two per cent, according to FBI preliminary figures. The breakdown for violent and property crimes listed 1.9 million violent crimes, a decrease of 0.4 per cent, and 12.2 million property crimes, down 2.3 per cent.

The FBI reported forcible rapes at 104,810, a decrease of 3.9 per cent; 659,760 robberies, down 1.9 per cent; 2.8 million burglaries, down 4.9 per cent; 7.8 million larcenies, down 1.2 per cent, and 1.6 million car thefts, down 3.1 per cent. Aggravated assaults hit 1.1 million, up 0.7 per cent, but the rate was 440.1 per 100,000, down 0.4 per cent, a reflection of the population rising to 257.9 million from 255.1. Experts, however, warned against becoming too optimistic about the numbers. Demographic trends chart an increasing number of violent teens with access to guns. "We haven't even begun to see the problem with teenagers that we will see in the next 10 years," said Jack Levin, sociology and criminology professor at Northeastern University in Boston. "There will be a 23 per cent increase in the teenage population over the next decade, and as a result, we're going to see the murder rate rise precipitously," he added.

People aged 19 and under accounted for 29.2 per cent of all known assailants last year, up from 26.6 in 1991 according to the FBI. The FBI also listed the murder rate ranking for 25 cities with more than 100,000 residents. Gary, Indiana, topped the list with 89.1 murders per 100,000 people. New Orleans, Louisiana, came in second at 80.3 and Washington took the number three slot with 78.5. Los Angeles was 25th with 30.5.

Zaire to close 38 diplomatic missions

KINSHASA (AFP) — Zaire's government is to close 38 diplomatic missions and consulates abroad, slashing the present total from 63 to 25, according to a statement published after a cabinet meeting Friday. The closures are designed to produce a saving of 56 million Belgian francs (some \$1.8 million) a month, the statement said. Kinshasa justified the decision by saying "not a day goes by without media commenting on the tribulations of our diplomats who have racked up almost 29 months of salary arrears, not to speak of expulsions and the humiliating trials they undergo for insolence over rent and various other charges." The statement added that, given the importance of the nation's credibility for its dealings with other states, "the government estimates it is time to pursue a policy in keeping with its means." The government has decided to recall as soon as possible all diplomats whose chancelleries are to be closed down, although the statement does not reveal which missions will be closed and which maintained. The state of the country's missions has been a topic of much anguished debate in Zaire in recent months. Less than a month ago, the Zairian charge d'affaires in Poland reportedly took refuge with local tramps who eke out a living around Warsaw's main railway station as he could no longer pay his rent. He was then forced to live a hand-to-mouth existence, relying on the generosity of fellow diplomats from other countries to eat. Some hard-up ambassadors have simply sold their state-owned residences to pay off debts or boost their own bank balances.

U.S. assures sceptical Egypt of friendship

CAIRO (R) — The top U.S. general assured the Egyptian government of Washington's friendship on Sunday, implicitly dismissing reports of serious disagreements over nuclear disarmament and policy towards Libya.

"It's extraordinarily important for our government to have such strong friends as Egypt. Without it our hands would be much more tied," General John Shalikashvili, chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, told reporters.

"We in the United States value very highly the good relationship we have and we want to make sure we do all that we can to maintain and to strengthen that relationship," he added, speaking after two hours of talks with President Hosni Mubarak.

Government newspapers have made much of U.S. press articles seen as critical of Egyptian policy and the two governments are known to differ on how to set about banning weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East.

One of Mr. Mubarak's political advisers, Osama Al Al, said on Sunday that Egypt and the United States

were bound to differ from time to time but he made light of the articles in the Washington Post and U.S. News and World Report.

"Egypt can never be a satellite of the United States...it's natural that Egyptian policy should not be identical with U.S. policy because that would mean Egypt had become a U.S. state or the United States a Middle East state," he told reporters.

The United States provides \$2 billion a year in aid and military equipment to Egypt, making it one of the biggest recipients of Washington's largesse in the world.

Apart from Gen. Shalikashvili, two other important U.S. officials — arms control negotiator Thomas Graham and Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Director James Woolsey — arrived in Cairo last week with minimal publicity.

Airport sources said Mr. Woolsey arrived on Friday but U.S. embassy officials were not available to confirm this.

Mr. Graham, deputy director of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, is campaigning for an indefinite extension of the nuclear Non-

Proliferation Treaty when it comes up for review at a conference in Geneva next April.

Israel has not signed the treaty and Egypt says it will not take a position on extending it until it has answers to some of its concerns on regional security.

"It's completely untrue.

We consider our relations with Egypt to be excellent. We very much appreciate our cooperation in the peace process and other wider matters," he added.

But Mr. Pelletreau appeared to evade questions on whether there was a disagreement over Egypt campaigning to make other Arab states withhold judgment on extending the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

The general was not asked about the press articles, which said Washington looked askance at high-level corruption at Cairo and at the close relationship between Egypt and Libya.

Dr. Baz said some "bureaucratic circles" other than decision-makers" might be behind the press articles.

"If these circles imagined they were putting pressure on Egypt, then far from it. Egypt does not act under

pressure and nothing frightens it," he added.

On Sunday the international newspaper Al Hayat quoted Robert Pelletreau, assistant U.S. secretary of state for the Middle East, as saying the articles were not officially inspired.

"It's completely untrue.

We consider our relations with Egypt to be excellent. We very much appreciate our cooperation in the peace process and other wider matters," he added.

But Mr. Pelletreau

NEWS IN BRIEF

Israeli troops shoot at British diplomat

TEL AVIV (AFP) — A British diplomat had a narrow escape on the Gaza Strip when Israeli soldiers opened fire on his car, military officials said Sunday. The shooting occurred Saturday night after Deputy Cultural Attaché Peter Morrison failed to stop at the Nahal Oz crossing between the Strip and Israel. A bullet smashed the rear window of the vehicle but Mr. Morrison, of the British Council in East Jerusalem, was unhurt. He apparently did not hear a shouted order to halt on a rainy night, the officials said. Troops fired in the air and then at the car which had diplomatic plates. Israeli soldiers shot a suspected Palestinian suicide bomber at the Erez crossing from Gaza on Sunday morning.

Kurdish paper hits stands despite bombings

ANKARA (R) — Turkey's leading pro-Kurdish daily appeared on news stands on Sunday, the day after large bombs badly damaged three of its offices, killing one person. The Turkish-language Ozgur Ulke, however, appeared slimmer than its normal six-page edition. It published photographs of wounded members of staff and the blackened shell of its Istanbul headquarters. One person was killed and at least 22 others wounded when simultaneous bomb blasts ripped through two Ozgur Ulke offices in Istanbul and its Ankara bureau in the early hours of Saturday. The paper's printing centre was not damaged. In its Sunday edition, Ozgur Ulke blamed the government for the blasts, saying it was trying to silence the paper because of its extensive coverage of the Kurdish guerrilla insurgency in southeast Turkey.

Kinkel slams Israeli 'contempt' for EU

BONN (AFP) — German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel, the acting president of the European Union (EU) Council of Ministers, has blasted the Israelis for what he calls their "contempt" for the EU, the weekly magazine Der Spiegel says in its Monday issue. According to the magazine, Mr. Kinkel was furious at being denied an opportunity to speak at the ceremony for the signing on Oct. 26 of a formal peace between Israel and Jordan. He was all the more irked because Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev was allowed to give a speech. Mr. Kinkel met Israeli Ambassador Avraham Primor on Friday and according to Der Spiegel told him, "Unless you learn to work with us (we are heading) for a crisis. Things cannot go on like this." He reportedly said the EU had contributed "more than anyone else" to financing the Middle East peace process and in return received only "contempt and lack of consideration."

from Israel. Mr. Kinkel was quoted as saying that compared to the EU, Russia's contribution in the Middle East was negligible. "And even the few rubles they have got, we supplied to them," he reportedly said.

Three shot dead in southern Egypt

CAIRO (AP) — Three suspected extremists were shot dead in a gun battle with police in southern Egypt, police officials said Sunday. And in a separate incident, a police officer and nine policemen were killed in an accident Sunday in Sohag 390 kilometres south of Egypt when their truck was hit by train as it crossed the rails and veered into the Nile. The shooting erupted Saturday night as police raided the hideout of the three men in sugar cane fields around Mallawi, 260 kilometres south of Cairo, said the officials. The three dead men were identified as Hassan Mohammad Abdul Salam, Sheriff Mamoud and Yehia Mohammad Kamel. Mallawi is the new stronghold of militants trying to overthrow President Hosni Mubarak's government and turn Egypt into an Islamic state. More than 460 people have been killed in the violent confrontation between the extremists and the government since 1992.

Sudan to advocate cooperation at Islamic summit

KHARTOUM (AFP) — Sudan is to urge this month's Islamic summit to stand firm against accusations that Islamic nations sponsor terrorism and abuse human rights. The Al Enqaz Al Watani daily said quoting a top official, Hassan Adam, director of international organisations in the Foreign Ministry, said Sudan would make the call at the summit in Casablanca, Morocco on Dec. 13 and 14. Anti-Islamic campaigns were trying to distort the image of Islam and to "curb the cultural Islamic tide which spread in most countries of the world," Mr. Adam told the paper. The Sudanese team would recommend laying down a strategy for restoring order to "the Islamic house in the political and economic spheres to cope with the growing international and regional blocs." He said Muslim leaders had to consider "the growing harassment of Muslims in some West European countries and unfounded media campaign against the Islamic faith and the individual Muslim." Muslim leaders should also take into consideration "the unfair and biased attitudes of the big powers towards disputes in Islamic countries" such as Bosnia-Herzegovina, he said. He added that the summit should also tackle the problems of the Muslim minorities and help those minorities attain their "full rights to dignity and freedom of belief."

Majlis supports Khamenei as top leader

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iranian ruler Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has tightened his grip on power winning overwhelming backing to be the top religious authority for Shiites in Iran, with parliament on Sunday joining the chorus of support.

Parliament issued a letter backing "the shining sun Ayatollah Al Ozma" (Grand Ayatollah) Khamenei as the right person to occupy the post of Marja-e-Taghid, or the source of religious emulation for Shiites.

Ayatollah Khamenei is the "most informed person on the question of Islam and the Muslim world, and the most qualified man to guide the Muslim community," said the letter read in the parliament.

Although there has been a slight resistance to Ayatollah Khamenei's designation it seems unlikely to stop him becoming a true successor to Ayatollah Khomeini, the founder of the Islamic republic, who commanded both political and religious leadership.

Following a short but intense campaign waged by Ayatollah Khamenei's followers in the heart of the political establishment, he was chosen as a marja by two of Iran's most influential religious and political organisations.

He also won support from the school of theology in Korasan province, the second most powerful in Iran, as well as from Iran's Revolutionary Guards and the head of Iraq's Shiite opposition, Ayatollah Mohammad Baker Hakim.

Although his designation does not reflect a general consensus among the country's powerful clergy, it paves the way for the leader to become the Islamic republic's religious and political强人 at the relatively young age of 55.

The crew members, including four musicians, were handed clothes and supplies of everything from shaving foam to moisturisers. They were then ushered into cars and driven to a

Achille Lauro survivors arrive in Kenyan port

MOMBASA (R) — A group of 106 cheering survivors from the Achille Lauro disaster arrived at the port of Mombasa on Sunday at the end of an ordeal that began when the liner burst into flames off the Horn of Africa last week.

The cargo ship MSC Lucy brought to Mombasa crew members from Central and South America, the Philippines, Italy and a handful of other countries, shipping officials said.

Four other ships carrying some 500 passengers and crew were expected in Mombasa on Sunday night and would be offloaded on Monday, they added.

Other survivors have arrived in the Red Sea port of Djibouti.

The crew members, including four musicians, were handed clothes and supplies of everything from shaving foam to moisturisers. They were then ushered into cars and driven to a

Mombasa hotel set on palm tree-lined white beaches.

One of the musicians, Marylin Maraw, told Reuters she was sleeping in her cabin when she heard a loud bang on her door. She at first ignored the noise but opened the door when it got louder.

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